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ABSTRACT

The differences and similarities among the evaluative standards and guidelines of the 52 accrediting agencies recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) are discussed. The U.S. system of accreditation (voluntary, nongovernmental, self-regulatory evaluation) is explained and the role of COPA in coordinating accrediting activities is discussed. Part I of this analysis provides an introduction and overview of the accreditation system. Part II considers those agencies recognized by COPA. They are subdivided into regional and national commissions. Specialized and professional accreditation is discussed in Part III. A total of 90 sets of standards used by accrediting agencies are examined. A general lack of consistency between the 52 agencies in assigning accreditation status is apparent. The confusion this generates for institutions is discussed as well as other criticisms of the accrediting process. To increase uniformity, an annual or biannual accreditation directory is recommended as well as agreement on basic nomenclature and conditions of accreditation. It is also suggested that a comprehensive overview of the interpretation, implementation, and application of accrediting standards would provide a valuable resource for American higher education. (SF)

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A Current Profile

ACCREDITING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

A Study of the Evaluative Standards and Guidelines Of 52 Accrediting Agencies Recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation

COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY ACCREDITATION
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I am especially indebted to those individuals who served as an advisory committee and who offered many constructive criticisms and helpful suggestions. They are: John L. Bennett, Director, Council on Podiatry Education, American Podiatry Association; Samuel H. Hope, Executive Director, National Association of Schools of Music; Robert Kirkwood, Executive Director, Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; Michael P. Lambert, Assistant Director, National Home Study Council; and Janet A. Strauss, Executive Director, Council on Education for Public Health.

D.G.P.

PREFACE

The problem of evaluating, assuring, and improving the quality of higher education is not peculiar to this country. Our approach to its solution is, however, unique among most nations.

In most other countries, national ministries of education promulgate educational standards and determine the extent to which they are met. In the United States, quality in higher education is evaluated, maintained, and strengthened by a system of voluntary peer accreditation.

This system functions through numerous accrediting agencies and typically involves a sequence of procedures which includes: (1) the development of evaluative standards and guidelines; (2) a self-analysis by an institution or unit of an institution; (3) an on-site visit by a group of peers to validate and complement the self-study; and (4) the judgment by an elected accrediting commission of educational quality as evidenced by achievement of stated objectives and/or agreement with predetermined standards.

This process has its advantages and disadvantages. It is ideally suited to the pluralistic nature of American higher education in that it permits and encourages diversity among institutions with relative freedom from the centralized control exercised in other countries. On the other hand, it is a fragmented system in which accrediting agencies, with rare exceptions, function

quite independently of each other and have ready access to relatively little information concerning the policies, requirements, and criteria of their counterparts.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation was formed in 1975 with a major purpose of coordinating voluntary accrediting activities and disseminating information concerning them to the higher education community.

This study is an attempt to implement that purpose. It is an objective comparative analysis of the differences and commonalities among the evaluative standards and guidelines of the fifty-two accrediting agencies now recognized by COPA. It also examines, and draws conclusions, concerning some of the more common claims and criticisms directed toward the accrediting process. It is intended as an informative and helpful reference for all accrediting agencies and institutions of higher education, as well as for foundations, government boards and agencies, and others interested in the subject.

Dr. Dorothy G. Petersen has done an outstanding job of sifting information from literally thousands of pages of materials supplied to her. Her scholarly approach to the task and her careful and fair presentation of what she observed is typical of Dr. Petersen's professional career. She is Dean Emeritus of Trenton State College in New Jersey and former Interim Executive Secretary, Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Kenneth E. Young
President
Council on Postsecondary Accreditation

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background. Accreditation in postsecondary education is a twentieth century American phenomenon duplicated in few, if any, other nations. It began as a reform movement in the early decades of the century when the need for some type of quality control in secondary and higher education was becoming increasingly evident. The public high school was replacing the academy; high school and college enrollments were growing at a rate several times that of the population increase; preparation for many professions was evolving from apprenticeship training to a period of formal schooling; and new colleges and universities were appearing with increasing frequency.

The growing size and complexity of these problems led to the formation of several educational associations whose primary purposes were to discuss problems of common interest, to elevate academic standards, to monitor college admissions, and to strengthen articulation between secondary and higher education. In their search for standardization of quality, the leaders of these associations rejected the European system of governmental control and external examinations and sought, instead, for a process compatible with the political traditions and heritage of this country. They developed a system of voluntary, nongovernmental, self-regulatory evaluation and accreditation which became, and remains today, a

responsible guardian of quality in higher education. As Selden states,

> ...accreditation is a manifestation in education of our form of government and political control, and as such is an integral and irrevocable part of the structure of higher education in this country. [1]

An early definition of accreditation is:

> Accreditment is the recognition accorded to an educational institution in the United States by means of inclusion in a list of institutions issued by some agency or organization which sets up standards or requirements that must be complied with in order to secure approval. [2]

A more recent definition states that,

> Accreditation in postsecondary education is a self-improvement, self-regulating process... The granting of accreditation status signifies that an institution or program meets or exceeds a level of educational quality believed to be necessary for that particular institution or program to achieve its stated purposes and, thereby, meet its responsibility to all its publics. [3]

Over the years, the number of accrediting agencies has fluctuated considerably. Today, there are fifty-two which are recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). The Council is a national, nongovernmental organization which became effective

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[1] William K. Selden, "Why Accreditation?" Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 31 (June, 1960), p. 300.

[2] George F. Zook and M.E. Haggerty, The Evaluation of Higher Institutions, Vol. 1: Principles of Accrediting Higher Institutions, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1936), p. 18.

[3] The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, The Balance Wheel for Accreditation (Washington, D.C., July, 1976), p. 1.

January 1, 1975 as a result of the merger of the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE) and the National Commission on Accrediting (NCA). The major purpose of COPA is "...to support, coordinate, and improve all nongovernmental accrediting activities conducted in the United States at the postsecondary educational level."[4]

In accord with this purpose, the Council sponsors occasional papers and studies on issues or problems relative to accreditation. The present study was commissioned in the hope that it will be helpful to (1) the higher education community as it seeks information on accrediting standards of the major agencies and (2) the accrediting associations as they continue to study and revise their evaluative criteria.

Three basic assumptions underlie the study. First, each of the agencies included in the study utilizes in its evaluation and accreditation process a statement of standards. The combined impact of these criteria upon the more than 4,000 institutions and more than double that number of programs now accredited by the associations would be difficult to overestimate. In general, however, many administrators and faculty members in higher education are familiar with only those standards which affect them directly. A study of the major areas of emphasis, agreement, and difference among the evaluative criteria of all the recognized accrediting agencies should

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[4] Ibid. p. 4.

be helpful to the higher education community in gaining a better understanding of the broad spectrum of accreditation.

Secondly, accrediting agencies, with few exceptions, function quite independently of each other and have ready access to relatively little information concerning the requirements and criteria of their counterparts. A comparative study of all criteria utilized by the accrediting community should, therefore, be of assistance to each agency as it appraises and updates its statement of standards and guidelines.

Thirdly, almost from its inception the accrediting movement has been subject to conflicting claims and criticisms. Its advocates see it as a "...means of encouraging institutional improvement of educational endeavors, thus assisting in the development of excellence in postsecondary education..."[5] and as a "...creative and constructive force in the academic world."[6] Its adversaries charge that it is a "coercive monopoly" by which "...incompetance is protected, alternatives foreclosed, competition stifled, orthodoxy enforced, new ideas blocked."[7]

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[5] Thurston E. Manning, "Accreditation Procedures and Actions of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education", North Central Association Quarterly, Vol. 50 (Summer-Spring, 1975-76), p. 18.

[6] Robert Kirkwood, "The Myths of Accreditation", Educational Record, Vol. 54 (Summer, 1973), p. 215.

[7] James D. Koerner, "Preserving the Status Quo, Academia's Hidden Cartel", Change, Vol. 3 (March/April, 1971), p. 50.

Recurring criticisms have usually centered upon (1) the proliferation and variety of agencies; (2) the excessive costs to an institution; (3) the duplication of functions; (4) the usurpation of institutional autonomy; (5) the inhibition of educational experimentation and innovation; (6) the use of outmoded criteria; (7) the emphasis upon form rather than substance; and (8) the rigid, quantitative, and prescriptive nature of the evaluative standards. All too often, however, such criticisms are supported by little evidence. Some, of course, such as the number of agencies and costs involved, relate to issues other than evaluative standards and can be neither refuted nor confirmed by a study of such standards. On the other hand, the present study should be able to shed some light on the validity of certain of these claims and criticisms to the extent that they are reflected in evaluative standards and guidelines.

Purposes. The major purposes of the study are:

1. To summarize the major points of emphasis contained in the evaluative standards and guidelines of fifty-two nationally recognized accrediting agencies.

2. To discover and compare significant areas of commonality and difference in the evaluative standards.

3. To examine accrediting standards in the light of certain claims made for, and criticisms leveled at, the accreditation of institutions of higher education.

4. To make recommendations for possible areas of study and review by the accrediting agencies and the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation.

Scope. The combined total of the evaluative criteria covers all facets of an institution and includes such diverse elements as the governing board, intercollegiate athletics, and long-range planning. This study, however, concentrates upon those major aspects which receive consistent emphasis throughout most standards. In general, these are: (1) goals and objectives; (2) governance, administration, and organization; (3) instructional staff; (4) curriculum; (5) students and student services; (6) library or instructional resources center; (7) facilities and equipment, and (8) financial resources.

For the most part, the study is confined to an analysis of the standards. Several agencies, however, supplement the actual standards with "preambles", "guidelines", or "interpretations" which accompany each criterion or which may be included as a separate section of the document. These are intended to elaborate, explain, reinforce, or interpret the standards. They are frequently more detailed, more specific, and more substantive than the actual standards. Because of their direct relationship, for purposes of this study, they are considered to be an integral part of the standards. No distinction is made, therefore, between a statement contained in a standard and one contained in its accompanying guideline.

Some associations publish their standards in manuals which may also contain information on organization, function, and other matters. This content was consulted to some extent for the information included in the sections entitled, "Purposes and Conditions of Accreditation" and was occasionally supplemented with information obtained by telephone or correspondence.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that a study of accrediting standards concentrates upon only a limited phase of the accreditation process. It does not, for instance, consider how the standards are related to the requirements of the institutional self-study; how they are interpreted by a visiting team; or how they are applied by an accrediting commission. Any or all of these aspects may, in the final analysis, be more significant than the actual content of the standards. To attempt to include these within a single study would, however, represent a project of far greater magnitude than is attempted here. It is strongly suggested, however, that a follow-up study of the implementation of the standards would provide valuable insight into the accreditation process as it presently operates in higher education.

Organization. There are two types of accreditation. Institutional accreditation pertains to the total institution. Part I considers those agencies now recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation to perform this function. For purposes of this study, these have been subdivided into two classifications. In the first

category are the nine regional commissions. These are discussed in Chapter 2 and include the following, listed in alphabetical order.

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education

New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., Commission on Vocational, Technical, Career Institutions

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Colleges

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Occupational Education Institutions

Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities

Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

In contrast to the regional associations, there are four national institutional accrediting agencies. These are discussed in Chapter 3 and include the following, listed in alphabetical order.

American Association of Bible Colleges

Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, Accrediting Commission

National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, Accrediting Commission

National Home Study Council, Accrediting Commission

A second type of accreditation is specialized and professional accreditation which is accreditation of a particular field or

specialization by a nationally recognized agency. At present, thirty-nine such agencies are recognized by COPA to accredit specialized programs or units within an institution or, in some instances, independent single-purpose institutions. For purposes of this study, this large group has been arbitrarily subdivided into two classifications. In the first category are those agencies which accredit, in general, postgraduate divisions of a university or health center as well as free-standing professional schools. The eleven agencies placed in this category are discussed in Part II, Chapter 4, and are listed below in alphabetical order.

American Bar Association

American Council on Pharmaceutical Education

American Dental Association, Commission on Accreditation of Dental and Dental Auxiliary Educational Programs

American Optometric Association, Council on Optometric Education

American Osteopathic Association

American Podiatry Association, Council on Podiatry Education

American Veterinary Medical Association, Council on Education

Association of American Law Schools

Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada

Council on Chiropractic Education

Liaison Committee on Medical Education of the Council on Medical Education, American Medical Association and the Executive Council, Association of American Medical Colleges

A second category consists of those agencies which accredit primarily programs, departments, divisions, or schools within a college or university. The twenty-eight associations placed in this classification are examined in Chapter 5 and are listed below in alphabetical order.

Accrediting Bureau of Medical Laboratory Schools

Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration

American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, Accreditation Council

American Chemical Society, Committee on Professional Training

American Council for Construction Education

American Council on Education for Journalism, Accrediting Committee

American Dietetic Association, Commission on Evaluation of Dietetic Education

American Home Economics Association, Council on Professional Development

American Library Association, Committee on Accreditation

American Medical Association, Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation

American Physical Therapy Association

American Psychological Association, Committee on Accreditation

American Society of Landscape Architects, Council on Education

American Speech and Hearing Association, Education and Training Board

Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc.

Council on Education for Public Health

Council on Rehabilitation Education, Commission on Standards and Accreditation

Council on Social Work Education

Engineers' Council for Professional Development

Foundation for Interior Design Education Research

National Architectural Accrediting Board

National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service, Inc.

National Association of Industrial Technology

National Association of Schools of Art

National Association of Schools of Music

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

National League for Nursing

Society of American Foresters

It should be reiterated that these four categories are used only for ease and convenience in examining and classifying data. It should also be recognized that there is considerable overlap among the four categories. Also, no inference is intended, nor should be drawn, concerning the quality or stature of the agencies from this arbitrary classification.

The accreditation standards and guidelines used as primary sources of data are listed at the close of each chapter. Unless otherwise indicated, footnotes refer to these listings. In all such footnotes, agencies are identified by the abbreviations which appear

in the list at the close of each chapter.

Chapter 6 presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations for additional study. A selected bibliography is included at the close of the study.

A list of all agencies and their identifying abbreviations, irrespective of classification, is contained in the Appendix.

Chapter 2

REGIONAL ACCREDITING ASSOCIATIONS

Although authorities differ slightly on exact dates, it is certain that four of the six regional associations were organized within a ten year period. The New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools led the way in 1885, followed closely by the Association of the Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Middle States and Maryland in 1887. According to one reference,

> The North Central Association was founded in 1894 with initial impetus provided by the Schoolmasters' Club of Michigan, a group of high school principals. They asked the Universities of Chicago, Michigan, and Wisconsin to join them in an organization that would work towards closer relations between the colleges and secondary schools...
>
> The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was begun the following year, 1895, with Vanderbilt University the force behind its foundation. [1]

Several years elapsed before the Northwest Association was formed in 1917 and the Western Association was the last to be organized in 1924.

As stated previously, these associations developed in answer to a need for closer coordination between secondary and higher education. Their gradual move toward stipulating requirements for membership led inevitably to attempts at accreditation and in 1903 the North

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[1] Mary Glenn Wiley and Mayer N. Zald, "The Growth and Transformation of Educational Accrediting Agencies: An Exploratory Study in Social Control of Institutions", Sociology of Education, Vol. 41 (Winter, 1968), p. 40.

Central Association published its first list of accredited high schools. The positive impact of this list upon the educational community encouraged the association to take its first cautious step toward college accrediting, described by one authority as follows:

> At the opening of the fourth half decade of the North Central Association's existence the anxious attention of the Association and, to a significant extent, of leaders of higher education all over the country, was turned on its experiment in college inspection and accrediting. No one expected precipitate action. The decision to accredit had waited on several years of deliberation, and several more years had gone into making all needful preliminary investigations and preparations. But in 1910 it seemed that the last of the preparatory moves had been made. A committee to inaugurate the work was appointed, equipped with standards for judging the liberal arts colleges both in the universities and separately. [2]

The result of these careful efforts was the first published list of accredited colleges which appeared in 1913. Other associations followed suit although it was not until 1952 that the New England Association "...over the determined opposition of the presidents of a few leading universities...voted to begin formal accreditation."[3]

Today, there are nine postsecondary accrediting commissions of the six regional associations. Their combined membership includes more than 2500 institutions located in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Virgin Islands, Canal Zone, Guam, and a few European and Latin American countries.

---

[2] John Erle Grinnell, "The Rise of the North Central Association", North Central Association Quarterly, Vol. 10 (January, 1936), p. 488.

[3] William K. Selden, Accreditation, (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1960), pp. 37-38.

The contributions of these agencies to the accrediting movement and to higher education in general have been summarized as follows:

> The regional associations of the nation did a pioneering job of tremendous significance; they are still the backbone of the accrediting movement...their activities have clearly set the pattern for an acceptable institution of higher education in America, and have unquestionably helped the American people generally to understand and appreciate the essentials of a good college or university.[4]

This chapter examines certain conditions and standards for accreditation used today by these regional agencies. The references which contain the standards and guidelines are listed on page 48 at the close of the chapter. It should be noted that the two Western Commissions share a common accreditation handbook, whereas the New England Commission on Vocational, Technical, Career Institutions uses separate standards for two types of institutions. As stated in Chapter 1, all footnotes, unless otherwise indicated, refer to these references. In all such footnotes, agencies are identified by the abbreviations indicated on page 48 . For instance, a footnote such as WASC- p. 10 refers to page 10 of the document of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges listed on page 48 at the close of this chapter.

I. PURPOSES AND CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

A. Purposes

One of the basic claims made for accreditation is that it is

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[4] Charles E. Friley, "National Trends in Accrediting", College and University, Vol. 25 (July, 1950), p. 539.

a powerful force for the strengthening of educational quality. Whether one agrees with this or not, there is no doubt that it is the avowed purpose of regional accreditation. The commissions are in virtually complete agreement when they view accreditation primarily as a means for promoting excellence in higher education in general and for encouraging self-improvement in individual institutions. Four of them express this philosophy in an identical statement to the effect that accreditation is for purposes of:

> fostering excellence in postsecondary education through the development of criteria and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness;
>
> encouraging institutional improvement of educational endeavors through continuous self-study and evaluation;
>
> assuring the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution has clearly defined and appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to do so;
>
> providing counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions;
>
> protecting institutions against encroachments which might jeopardize their educational effectiveness or academic freedom.[5]

Similar emphasis upon accreditation as a vehicle for educational improvement is contained in the statement of purpose of the two Southern Commissions:

> ...the Commission on Colleges...considers its principal concern in accreditation to be the improvement of educational quality in the institutions of the area it serves.[6]

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[5] MSA- Policies and Procedures Handbook, p. 15; NCA- p. 7; NWA- pp. 1-2; WASC- p. 7.

[6] SA/CC- p. 1.

> The Commission through its program of evaluation and accreditation of occupational education endeavors to improve the quality of occupational education and, through this process, to help strengthen the South's economy and effect a positive influence on its entire educational system. [7]

The New England Commissions are similar in intent but slightly different in emphasis, as they consider their primary purpose, "...to develop and maintain sound educational standards". [8]

B. Term of Accreditation

The regional commissions differ slightly in their policies concerning the periods of time for which accreditation is granted. For those agencies which specify a definite term, five years is the maximum for initial accreditation and ten years for reaccreditation.

At least two agencies, however, do not accredit for a definite time period but state rather that accreditation must be reaffirmed periodically. The policies of Northwest and Middle States are fairly similar in this regard as illustrated by the following statements:

> Continuing members are not accredited permanently or for a definite number of years. Accreditation must be reaffirmed periodically. Every institution is to conduct a self-study and be visited by a full evaluation committee at least every ten years; every five years each institution is to prepare an interim report and be visited by one or more representatives of the Commission. At the time of reaffirmation, the Commission may request an institution to submit additional reports at specified times and/or to receive a visit by a small evaluation committee. The Commission may also request that an institution conduct a complete self-study and be visited by a full evaluation committee.[9]

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[7] SA/COEI- p. 4.

[8] NE/CHE- p. 1; NE/CVTC (1&2)- p. 1

[9] NWA- p. 13.

Accreditation is viewed as a continuing status which, once conferred, is not removed except for cause and then only with scrupulous observance of due process. A responsible accrediting program, however, necessarily includes periodic review of accredited institutions, both for their benefit and for the fulfillment of the Commission's accountability to the academic community and to the public. The timing of such reviews varies in accord with the circumstances of a given institution, and with the Commission's judgment as to how it can best serve the institution's needs while simultaneously meeting its broader accountabilities.

At the time of initial accreditation or of reaffirmation, the Commission indicates the nature and timing of the institution's next report. It may also determine the type of evaluation visit which will follow that report; or it may await receipt of the report before deciding on the necessity and/or nature of a visit. The Commission's review of an institutional report, whether or not accompanied by a visit, effectually constitutes review of an institution's accreditation.

In no case will an institution be permitted to go longer than five years without reporting to the Commission, or longer than ten years without an evaluation visit. Moreover, if an institution undergoes significant change or if its educational effectiveness is seriously questioned, the Commission reserves the right to review that institution's accreditation, without regard to any previously indicated time pattern. [10]

C. Conditions of Eligibility

Table I lists the conditions of eligibility for initial accreditation by the regional commissions, exclusive of such procedural requirements as "submit an application" or "prepare a self-study". The high degree of uniformity among the seven collegiate commissions is apparent, although the Western and New England Commissions assume a somewhat greater "consumer protection" role than the others in specifying an equitable tuition refund policy and a published catalogue.

---

[10] NEA- Periodic Review Report (December, 1977), p. 1.

Table I

Institutional Eligibility Requirements for Initial Accreditation
by the Regional Accrediting Associations

Condition	Agency								
	MSA	NE/CHE	NE/CVTC (1)	NE/CVTC (2)	NCA	NWA	SA/CC	SA/COEI	WASC
Have a charter and proper licensing to award postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree	X[a]	X[a]	X	X[b]	X	X	X	X[b]	X
Have a governing board which is representative of the public interest	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Have employed a chief administrative officer	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Have admission policies compatible with objectives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Have established an adequate financial base of funding and have available latest audited statement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Have graduated at least one class			X	X					
Offer one or more educational programs at least one year in length or the equivalent with clear objectives and a statement of means for achievement	X	X		X[c]	X	X	X		X
Include general education at the postsecondary level as a prerequisite to or an essential element in its programs	X	X			X	X	X		X
Have developed a survey or evidence of basic planning for development of institution	X	X			X	X	X		X[d]

Table I (continued)

Condition	Agency							
	MSA	NE/CHE	NE/CVTC (1)	NE/CVTC (2)	NCA	NWA	SA/CC	SA/COEI	MASC
Have appropriate and adequate learning resources		X							X[d]
Have published policies and procedures in accord with accepted policies, for refunding fees and charges to students who withdraw from enrollment		X							X
Have a catalogue and official publications stating purposes and objectives; entrance requirements and procedures; programs and courses; degree requirements and other relevant items		X							X
Designate a defined program of studies to meet degree requirements; provide adequate guidance to meet requirements; and demonstrate adequacy of evaluation procedures		X							
Have a clear emphasis on occupational education as the core of instruction								X	
Be a non-collegiate institution of occupational education								X	

a Requires a college degree
b Does not stipulate the awarding of a certificate, diploma, or degree
c Stipulates only that at least one program offer one year of instruction beyond the secondary level
d Specifies library and faculty

II. STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The earliest attempts at accreditation by the regional associations were based on simple sets of criteria involving such fundamental institutional characteristics as size of endowment, number of faculty, number of years of high school required for admission, and length of the educational program. As interest and need grew, however, the criteria became more numerous, more specific, and more quantitative. Bethel describes the period of the early 1920's as a time of,

> ...expansion of standards to include a greater number of characteristics thought to be essential to educational effectiveness; and the statement of standards in exact numerical terms instead of the more flexible and general standards used at the beginning of the accrediting movement. [11]

Within a very few years, criticism of such specific and quantitative standards accelerated to the point that, in 1929, the North Central Association embarked upon a three-year study of its evaluation standards. The purpose and results of the study are described as follows:

> ...the North Central Association decided to ascertain whether there was any validity in the old-type quantitative standard (endowment, 15 units of admission, 120 semester hours, and the like) and if not whether qualitative criteria which were both dependable and feasible in the accrediting process could be substituted. Suffice it to say that at the end of a three-year period those who were in charge of the study reached the conclusion that there was not a single one of the quantitative standards

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[11] Lawrence L. Bethel, The Historical Development and Present Status of Procedures for Accrediting American Colleges and Universities, Ph.D Dissertation (Yale University, May 1, 1940), p. 81.

that could be validated against any of the qualitative measures which were applied to the institutions. It was a complete confirmation of what most people had long suspected. Immediately thereafter the old quantitative standards of the North Central Association were abolished outright and qualitative criteria substituted therefor. [12]

The adoption of qualitative standards by the North Central Association in 1934 was one of the most significant developments in the history of the accrediting movement. In the years that followed, other regionals moved in the same direction and today all express their criteria predominantly in qualitative terms. Only the Southern College Commission refers to its qualitative and quantitative criteria. In the combined standards and guidelines of the nine commissions, there are only seven which contain quantitative measures and these are offered as "suggested" or "recommended" requirements. The emphasis which these agencies place upon the qualitative nature of their standards is indicated in such statements as the following:

> The standards of evaluation are qualitative. They are applied both to individual programs and to the institution as a whole. In making a recommendation concerning membership, the Commission bases its judgment on the nature and purposes of each institution, the appropriateness of the objectives of the institution to higher education, and the effectiveness of the institution in fulfilling its objectives. [13]

Because of the diversity of institutional purposes and the processes for achieving the purposes, the standards are qualitative

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[12] George F. Zook, "Who Should Control Our Institutions of Higher Education?", Educational Record, Vol. 20 (January, 1939), pp. 38-39.

[13] NE/CVTC (1)- p. 1.

rather than being stated in quantitative terms. Attention is directed to those areas which are deemed important in the assessment of quality. 14

...principles and practices which the Commission considers characteristic of excellent institutions. They are described qualitatively, rather than quantitatively. They include no formulas for specific application, no endorsements of particular patterns of organization, for the Commission considers the determination of such to be the province of trustees, administration, and faculty. The institution must retain its identity and integrity. 15

Although all standards are couched almost exclusively in qualitative terms, there are significant differences among them in terminology and format. North Central has not used the term "standards" or "criteria" for several years. It has an Evaluation Guide for Institutional Effectiveness which "...directs attention to several areas which are considered important in the assessment of quality in postsecondary institutions."16

Middle States has a similar document entitled Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education and sub-titled Standards for Middle States Accreditation which identifies important common denominators of "...superior educational institutions...irrespective of particular settings." 17

Both documents place heavy reliance upon an institution's ability to prepare an analytical self-study and upon the subjective judgment of a visiting evaluation team. Both are descriptive

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14 NWA- p. 15.

15 MSA- p. 3

16 NCA- p. 61.

17 MSA- p. 2.

rather than prescriptive. Both refrain completely from the application of specific formulas or measures and from specific requirements concerning the content or format of the self-study.

The two New England Commissions utilize three statements of Standards for Membership which are also very generalized and are the most concise in the group.

In contrast, the documents of the Western, Northwest, and Southern Commissions are the most detailed and prescriptive, either in the actual wording of the standards or in the descriptive, illustrative, or interpretative content which accompanies the standards. This is particularly true of the Northwest document which indicates that the institutional self-study should contain specific and detailed information on items ranging all the way from the occupations of governing board members to the net profit and loss of the book store.

There is considerable similarity among all documents in terms of the broad institutional characteristics examined in the evaluative process. The remainder of this chapter examines the emphases, similarities, and differences in the eight major areas which receive consistent attention from all agencies.

A. Goals and Objectives

A second major outcome of the three-year North Central study was adoption of the principle that an institution should be evaluated in terms of its own objectives. This policy represented

a radical departure from the earlier practice of applying standardized requirements to all institutions. It recognized the individuality of diverse institutions and encouraged them to develop according to their own goals and resources. This basic premise underlies the accrediting activities of all regional agencies at the present time. All of them evaluate and accredit an institution according to (1) the appropriateness of its stated objectives; (2) the adequacy of its resources and programs to achieve those objectives; and (3) the evidence that it is indeed attaining the objectives. In accord with this philosophy, the standards on institutional goals and objectives contain three major emphases. For the most part, the regional agencies agree that institutional objectives should be:

1. Well formulated; clearly defined; appropriate to higher education in general and to the specific role, programs, and resources of the institution.

2. Available and published in institutional catalogues and other public documents.

3. Reexamined and re-evaluated periodically.

In addition, the more detailed statements mention such procedural specifics as:

> ...an organized and functional institutional advisory committee shall be appointed to provide input from the community. [18]
>
> The statement of functions and objectives should have been cooperatively developed... [19]

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[18] SA/COEI- p. 21.

[19] WASC- p. 33.

A frequent criticism of accrediting agencies is that they concentrate on form rather than substance. In other words, there are many who are concerned that the emphasis is on "input" measures such as budget, facilities, and faculty rather than upon educational outcomes. The literature on the subject, however, indicates that almost from the beginning there has been interest in evaluating an institution according to its product or outcomes; i.e., the achievement of its objectives. Today, this idea is widely accepted in principle. In practice, however, it presents many very real problems. Perhaps this is the reason why it receives comparatively little attention in the accrediting standards of these agencies. Most of them say little or nothing on the topic. The only really substantive statement is the following from Middle States.

> The deciding factor in assessing any institution is evidence of the extent to which it achieves the objectives it has set for itself. Such evidence is, of course, difficult to assemble and to evaluate, but the necessity of seeking it continually is inescapable.
>
> Ultimately there are only three questions which need to be asked about an educational institution: Has it clearly defined objectives which are appropriate to higher education and to its own potential? Does it have the programs and resources to attain them? How well does it achieve them?
>
> The third question may be difficult to answer, since many of the objectives of higher education are deeply concerned with the encouragement of intellectual and personal maturity which are not amenable to objective measurement or statistical analysis. Nevertheless, one of the primary marks of a competent faculty, administration and governing board is the skill with which they seek answers, criticizing and improving their procedures in the light of their findings. The approaches need be neither elaborate nor

solely dependent on mechanical means, but they should be thorough and persistent.

They use tests and measurements, among other means, to discover all that such devices can tell about the progress of their students in the mastery of subject matter, development of skills, logical precision, and ability to apply knowledge. They test student achievement in general as well as specialized areas of the curriculum, on an inclusive as well as course-by-course basis, and when possible in comparison with student achievement elsewhere. They make frequent appraisals of the records of their graduates in education beyond the two or four-year college level. They survey alumni opinions. They solicit reports from employers. They do not depend wholly on any indices, but they search and weigh them all for evidence of progress or success...

A plan for the measurement of outcomes may well have these sections: first, an evaluation of undergraduate scholastic achievement, taking the form of comparison of scores in standardized tests with the results of placement examinations taken at entrance; second, a study of the performance of graduates in senior colleges or in graduate and professional schools; third, a long-term study of the achievements, both vocational and avocational, of the alumni based on data gathered periodically and systematically. This will obviously involve continuous cooperation between the alumni and the administration. An intensive study of one class from entrance through graduation and beyond may be fruitful. Such longitudinal studies should be a regular function of an internal research program.

Outcome studies, if they are to be most productive, should accumulate useful data for institutional research and development. Their utilization is a measure of an institution's sophistication in the use of the self-study process and its understanding of the nature of the data needed for sound planning. 20

B. Governance, Administration, and Organization

Standards on this topic range from a single terse paragraph in the two documents of the New England Vocational Commission to the fairly explicit, detailed statements of the Southern, Northwest, and Western Commissions. Although they differ in the degree of specificity, the regional commissions are generally consistent with respect to

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20 NEA- pp. 6-7.

the essentials of an effective administrative structure. Their standards indicate that they are primarily interested in two basic components.

First, there must be a competent governing board whose members are elected because of their ability and interest in serving the institution. No agency indicates a critical size for the board, although four reiterate their eligibility requirements to the effect that board membership should include adequate representation of the public interest. In addition, the Southern College Commission specifies the importance of "...appropriate continuity and independence" of membership through,

> ...express provision for individual terms of adequate length, reasonably staggered; and for removal from office only for cause, by procedures involving due process, desirably by the board itself. 21

The regional commissions make a sharp distinction between the policy-making function of the governing board and the operational authority of the administrative staff in such statements as:

> Neither the board as a whole nor individual members of the board should be involved in institutional management functions but the board ought to concern itself with all aspects of the institution's program and operations. The board should look to the chief administrative officer for leadership in matters of policy as well as for the execution of policy and should expect to be kept fully informed about all major decisions of the administration. 22

A clear differentiation between the policy making function of

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21 SA/CC- pp. 4-5.

22 WASC- p. 59.

the board and the executive responsibilities of those who carry out these policies is essential. The administrative officer should be free to operate within board policies, according to a carefully developed administrative code. Such conditions are basic to the exercise of effective farsighted leadership in institutional development and advancement of objectives. [23]

The function of the lay board is determination of institutional policies stated in broad terms. For translating policy into educational terms, the board looks to those in the institution who possess this competence, the administration and the faculty. [24]

In addition to policy determination, two of the commissions emphasize the responsibility of the board in protecting the institution from unfavorable external pressures in the following statements.

...the governing board should not be subject to undue pressures from political or religious bodies; furthermore, the governing board should protect the administration from similar pressures. [25]

It should act as a body politic, not be subject to pressures (state, political, or religious) and should protect the institution from the same. [26]

The second major component recognized by these agencies for effective leadership is a carefully planned, clearly delineated organizational structure. According to the standards, an accreditable institution is characterized by:

1. Effective leadership

...the factor of most significance is the quality of leadership and the maintenance of a climate which encourages the generation of new ideas. [27]

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[23] WNA- pp. 42-43.

[24] NCA- p. 69

[25] SA/CC- p. 4.

[26] WNA- p. 42.

[27] NCA- p. 71.

2. Adequate and competent administrative staff

The administrative staff...must be well-organized; the individuals composing it must be competent in their particular phases of administration; it must be adequately staffed to carry on all of its work; it must, under able leadership, be so coordinated as to work effectively as a unit. [28]

3. Provision for faculty involvement

A role for faculty in institutional governance is an appropriate recognition of their professional competence and commitment. [29]

4. Provision for student involvement

Provision should be made for the consideration of student views and judgments in policy formation consistent with the objectives of the institution. [30]

5. Adequate channels of communication

Ample opportunities for communication throughout the institution are highly important. [31]

On an ever-increasing number of campuses, collective bargaining is adding a new dimension to institutional governance. Three of the eight documents recognize this trend but indicate only that it should not have a negative impact upon the educational program. The Western Commissions request that evaluation include, "Collective bargaining, if it is in effect, and its impact, if any, on the educational program". [32] The statements of the Southern College Commission and the Middle States Commission are as follows:

Whenever institutional policies and procedures are modified

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[28] MSA- p. 10.

[29] MSA- p. 9.

[30] NE/CHE- p. 2.

[31] NWA- p. 42.

[32] WASC- p. 61.

by application of collective bargaining agreements between institutions and their faculties, such modifications should not contravene the requirements of this standard or unduly disrupt the educational process of the institution. [33]

The decision to enter into a collective bargaining arrangement is primarily institutional. However, an institution should be rightly concerned about the impact of such arrangements on the quality and effectiveness of its educational endeavors. [34]

C. Instructional Staff

Matters pertaining to the instructional staff are, apparently, of considerable interest to the regional associations. All agree that the quality of faculty is a major determinant of institutional effectiveness, as evidenced by such similar statements as the following:

The selection and supervision of the faculty are fundamental to the teaching function. [35]

The faculty and the quality of its instructional program are the main strengths of an institution of higher education. [36]

The quality of the faculty and of the instructional program are measures of the strengths of an institution of career education. [37]

The quality of an institution is determined in large part by its success in recruiting and retaining an instructional staff competent to perform the educational tasks which the institution has set for itself. [38]

The selection, development, and retention of a competent faculty at all instructional levels is of paramount importance to all institutions. [39]

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[33] SA/CC- p. 14.

[34] MSA- p. 9.

[35] MSA- p. 9.

[36] NE/CHE- p. 3

[37] NE/CVTC (I&2)- p. 2.

[38] NCA- p. 67.

[39] NWA- p. 39.

> The selection, development, and retention of a competent faculty at all academic levels is of major importance to all institutions.[40]

> Selecting, developing, and retaining a staff which is competent to meet the purposes of the institution is of utmost importance to the success of the institution.[41]

Most of the statements on academic qualifications are very general and stipulate primarily that the scholarship, training, and experience of the faculty should be appropriate to their responsibilities. The Southern College Commission, however, states in specific terms that,

> In community or junior colleges, approximately forty percent of the teaching faculty in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences should possess educational preparation equivalent to one year of advanced study in the teaching field beyond the master's degree...
>
> In the senior colleges, approximately fifty percent of the teaching faculty in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences should possess educational preparation equivalent to one year of advanced study in the teaching field beyond the master's degree, and approximately thirty percent should hold the earned doctor's degree. In the individual disciplines in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences, in which a major concentration of courses is offered, approximately one quarter of the faculty should hold the earned doctorate in that discipline.[42]

Other aspects of the instructional staff which receive varying degrees of attention in the standards are faculty responsibilities, evaluation, professional development, paraprofessionals, full-time/part-time faculty, and others. None of these, however, is apparently of as much concern to the regional agencies as a whole as the conditions of faculty service. It should be noted, however, that

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[40] SA/CC- p. 13. [41] SA/COEI- p. 26. [42] SA/CC- p. 15.

the degree of emphasis on this topic varies greatly. North Central's document contains practically no mention of such factors as faculty salaries, benefits, or work loads while the Southern College Commission goes into some detail in a discussion of "Financial Security", "Professional Security", "Academic Freedom" and "Teaching Loads". In general, however, those standards which devote some attention to those aspects contain such general and non-prescriptive statements as the following:

1. Salaries

> Providing faculty salaries which reflect the importance and worth of college teaching in American society should always be an institutional goal. Faculty salaries should show steady progress toward this goal. In addition, the institution should have as an immediate goal the establishing of a salary structure which will place it in a reasonably competitive relationship with similar institutions. Intensive effort should be made to improve the salary structure if it is short of this immediate goal. [43]

2. Security

> Faculty security should also be implemented through faculty tenure provisions and safeguards for academic freedom. [44]

3. Teaching Loads

> Teaching loads and schedules will vary from field to field and from institution to institution but should in all cases allow time for adequate preparation and continuing professional growth. [45]

4. Benefits

> A program of benefits, including a sound retirement plan in which the institution participates and which protects the faculty member's equity, should be maintained. [46]

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[43] SA/CC- p. 16.

[44] NCA- p. 39.

[45] NE/CHE- p. 3.

[46] SA/CC- p. 16.

5. Academic Freedom

A sound educational environment requires a secure framework of academic freedom. [47]

D. Educational Program

Undergraduate Program. In view of the great diversity of institutions accredited by the regional agencies, it is not surprising that their standards on educational programs are stated only in very general terms. In accord with their philosophy that accreditation is based upon institutional objectives, these commissions emphasize that the educational program must relate to stated purposes in such statements as:

> There should be a clear relationship between the expressed functions and purposes and the educational program devised to attain them. [48]

> The educational program must be clearly related to the purposes of the institution. [49]

> There must always be a sensible and demonstrable relationship between stated purposes and objectives and the actual program. [50]

> The curriculum shall be directly related to institutional objectives... [51]

A second consistent emphasis is placed upon the importance of clearly outlined program requirements in catalogues and other published materials.

> Whatever the requirements for degrees, diplomas, certificates or other evidence of program completion may be, they should be clearly set forth in advance to avoid misunderstanding. General

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[47] MSA- p. 9.

[48] WASC- p. 35.

[49] SA/CC- p.6; NWA- p. 31.

[50] MSA- p. 4.

[51] NE/CVTC (1)- p. 3.

requirements to be met by students should appear in official publications of the institution; individual requirements, in some type of written memorandum or contract. [52]

The program of study and degree requirements should be clearly stated, and students should be held to the accomplishment of a defined amount and quality of work.[53]

The curricular offerings of an institution should be clearly and accurately described in published materials. [54]

Although all of the college commissions specify inclusion of general education as a condition of eligibility for initial accreditation (see page 20), only two of them repeat this requirement in their accrediting standards. The statement of the Western Commissions is very general but the New England College Commission is specific in its requirement that,

Terminal programs and curricula in technical, specialized, or professional fields are expected to show an appropriate regard for the three major areas of knowledge, i.e., the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences, by insuring that at least a quarter of the typical student's program consists of courses from among these three areas. [55]

In addition to these college commissions, the New England Vocational Commission requires general education in Associate Degree programs. The following is the most prescriptive statement concerning the educational program contained in the regional standards.

...the institution shall offer and require that students complete at least 12 semester hours in 1 and/or 2, and/or 3 below, plus 8 semester hours in 4 and/or 5 below:

1. Communications and/or Literature
2. Social Sciences
3. Humanities and Fine Arts

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[52] NCA- p. 65.

[53] NE/CHE- p. 2.

[54] NWA- p. 31.

[55] NE/CHE- p. 2.

4. Business Subjects
5. Mathematics and Sciences [56]

In contrast, the standards of the Southern Vocational Commission contain no mention of general education.

Graduate Program. Three commissions devote a separate standard to graduate programs. Standard Ten of the Southern College Commission is probably the most comprehensive in its consideration of such aspects of the graduate program as administration, faculty, students, library, and non-traditional programs. This standard specifies that Master's and Doctor's programs must be staffed by a minimum of four or five full-time faculty members; and that the Master's Degree is the equivalent of one year of full-time study and the Doctor's Degree of three years. It also emphasizes that graduate programs require a substantial increase in library holdings and recommends a "long-demonstrated formula" in librarianship which indicates "...that an institution should spend twice as much for staff and services as it spends for library materials."[57]

Similar emphasis is placed by the Western and Northwest Commissions upon adequate resources, competent faculty, and increased costs of graduate education. In addition, the Northwest Commission stresses the importance of proper size and diversity of the graduate student body.

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[56] NE/CVTC (1)- p. 3.

[57] SA/CC- p. 30.

A graduate school is a community of scholars, and they profit from one another in sharing their experiences, ideas, and knowledge. Thus, the student body should be of sufficient size and diversity to broaden this aspect of graduate education. It is important that the graduate students come from many parts of the nation and world in order to provide for the cross-fertilization and breadth of knowledge. Any policy that restricts the student body in its geographic, political, social, or religious origins will be detrimental and prohibitive to the attainment of a mature and quality graduate program. [58]

Supplementary Educational Programs. Four documents discuss in some detail programs which are offered in extension centers, branch campuses, or through travel, foreign study, or other non-traditional means. On the whole, the standards are supportive of such experiences although they do emphasize the institution's responsibility for maintaining proper academic standards. North Central's recognition and support of such activities are illustrated in the following statement:

...the interests of the individual and of the society may be better served by flexible arrangements under which an individual's education is interrupted from time to time by work or other activities, or combined with such activities. Indeed, it may no longer serve to make neat distinctions between formal, traditional education and other educational experiences. [59]

Innovation and Experimentation. One of the most common criticisms of accrediting agencies is that they inhibit innovation and experimentation. As already indicated, the limited number of specific, quantitative, prescriptive measures contained in the standards of the regional associations does not support this criticism. In

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[58] NWA- p. 64.

[59] NCA- p. 65.

addition, several agencies indicate that they support and encourage educational innovation. North Central's philosophy on this point is illustrated in the preceding quote. The Southern Vocational Commission states that,

> Institutions should have a procedure whereby specialized and innovative programs can be accommodated. [60]

The Southern College Commission also encourages institutions "...to develop experimental programs for advanced and talented students"[61] although it does stipulate that experiments which represent radical departures from the standards must be reported to the Commission.

The following statement of the Middle States Association leaves no doubt as to that agency's position on the matter of educational experimentation and innovation.

> Perceptive and imaginative experimentation aimed at intensifying the effectiveness of higher education is a sign of institutional vitality and should be continually encouraged from within. The Commission on Higher Education supports no particular theories or styles of education or organization; neither does it prescribe specific rules or formulas. It is cognizant that special requirements may pertain to some institutions, but these should not be permitted to inhibit innovative approaches and emphases in their educational programs. The Commission insists only that new departures and adaptations be consistent with an institution's purposes and objectives as originally established or as modified to accommodate new conditions. [62]

E. Students and Student Services

In no other area does the degree of detail and specificity

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[60] SA/COEI- p. 24.

[61] SA/CC- p. 7.

[62] MSA- p. 16.

differ more than in the standards in this area. North Central includes no separate section on students or student services but makes passing reference to one aspect (counseling) in its statement on resources. In contrast, the comprehensive statement of the Northwest Commission goes into considerable detail with twelve sub-titles on admissions, registrar, orientation, counseling and testing, financial aid, housing, health, extracurricular activities, athletics, book store, placement, and alumni.

Admissions. There is agreement among the regional agencies that the determination of admissions policies and requirements is an institutional prerogative. No college commission stipulates any specific requirement or endorses any particular policy. The primary emphasis is on the appropriateness of the admissions policy to the purposes, functions, and resources of the institution. The Middle States document expresses this viewpoint clearly in the following statement:

> An important index of an institution's calibre is the appropriateness of its admissions policy as evidenced in requirements, standards, and procedures. The policy must be clearly stated and related to the objectives and resources of the institution. Likewise, programs and services must be formulated in relation to the admissions policy. An institution which maintains an open-door policy must make adequate provision for testing, counseling and compensatory services. Similarly, one which has a very selective admissions policy must ensure sufficient challenge and stimulus for its students. In all cases, there should be a demonstrable correlation between admissions policies and educational practices. [63]

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[63] MSA- p. 7.

The two vocational commissions differ somewhat in their admission policies. The New England Commission advises that, "In general, an institution shall require for admission, a high school education or its equivalent"[64] while the Southern Commission permits an institution to "...accept applicants of high school age who drop out of a secondary program when the administrations of both institutions determine that this change will be beneficial for the student."[65]

Transfer Students. According to one authority,[66] at one time accrediting agencies encouraged institutions to accept transfer students only from accredited institutions. Nowhere in the present standards of the regional agencies is there any intimation of such a policy. A few statements do refer briefly to transfer students but their chief concern is that the transfer student should be officially informed of his academic status at the time of his acceptance.

Counseling and Advisement. There is general agreement that a well-developed student counseling program is a vital factor in a quality institution. Regional agencies recognize that the type and extent of the program varies according to the purposes of the institution. At least two agencies express the point of view, however, that a satisfactory counseling program should be the joint

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[64] NE/CVTC (1&2)- p. 3.

[65] SA/COEI- p. 24.

[66] Lawrence L. Bethel, Op.Cit. p.4.

responsibility of faculty and a trained counseling staff. Only the Northwest Commission specifies that the counseling program should utilize standardized testing instruments.

> Every collegiate institution should make use of educational and psychological tests to evaluate the capabilities and interests of the student. Accurate test information on each student should be routinely provided to academic advisers and counselors. Provision should be made for the interpretation of test data to the individual student. [67]

Student Activities. Mention of student activities such as organizations, publications, and other extra-curricular activities is confined primarily to the documents of three agencies. All of these discuss intercollegiate athletics and specify that no distinction in admission or curricular requirements shall be made between athletes and other students.

> Admission procedures and requirements, including academic standards and curricular requirements for athletes shall be the same as for other students. [68]

> Intercollegiate athletics should be related to the total program of the institution. Academic policies must be the same for athletes as for other students. [69]

> Students involved in athletic or other school activities should meet the same requirements as other full-time students. [70]

Student Conduct. Only the Northwest and Southern College Commissions make reference to student conduct. Both specify that an institution should develop a code of conduct or standards of behavior which should be clearly defined and adequately publicized.

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[67] NWA- p. 51.

[68] NWA- p. 58.

[69] SA/CC- p. 21.

[70] SA/COEI- p. 33.

The Northwest Commission adds that the code should contain provisions for dealing fairly and equitably with violators and that it should,

> ...recognize and protect the right of students to engage in orderly and responsible dissent and provide avenues for dealing with such dissent so that students are not attracted to disruptive and violent action. [71]

F. Library

Regional agencies are consistent in their emphasis upon the library or learning resources center as a critical element in evaluating educational quality. All standards speak to the need for adequate library resources although none quantify requirements. Most state simply that the size and type of collection should be related to institutional objectives and educational needs of students. In addition, particular elements which these agencies consider important in assessing the effectiveness of the library are:

1. A competent, professionally trained staff.

> The selection, development, and retention of library personnel have a direct bearing on the library's success in achieving its objectives. The number of library personnel and the competencies to be possessed must be based upon the specific objectives which have been established for the library. Professional degrees at the graduate level in library science or learning resources should be held by most professional library staff; however, professional or technical training in specialized service areas may be appropriate for other library personnel to provide necessary library resources and services effectively. [72]

2. Cooperation of faculty and library staff in developing and and utilizing the collection.

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[71] NWA- p. 46.

[72] SA/CC- p. 18.

The faculty and library staff need to work closely together in planning the development and employment of library resources to achieve their educational objectives, and also to stimulate recreational reading. [73]

3. Periodic evaluation and updating of the collection

Collections of books, periodicals, pamphlets, films, tapes and other materials should be culled at regular intervals; replacement of equipment should follow a detailed and budgeted schedule. [74]

G. Facilities and Equipment

Not surprisingly, these agencies, which accredit entire institutions, are concerned to a certain extent about physical facilities. Such terms as "properly equipped", "aesthetically pleasing", "safe", "healthful", "sanitary", and "well designed" appear throughout the standards. All statements, however, are very general and the traditional complaint that accrediting standards specify the "number of square feet required" can, in no respect, be applied to these agencies. The following typify the generality with which the regionals address the matter of physical facilities and equipment.

The physical plant, including buildings, grounds, and equipment, whether on campus or at other locations where educational experiences are provided, should be judged in terms of the requirements of the educational program and the needs of the students. The physical facilities should be designed to accomplish the task which the institution is attempting to carry out and should be well maintained and in good repair. [75]

Physical facilities, including grounds, classroom buildings, laboratories, associated structures, equipment, and research

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[73] MSA- p. 13.

[74] WASC- p. 50.

[75] NCA- p. 68.

facilities, where this is a function, should be designed and maintained to enable the institution to exercise its functions and achieve its purposes. [76]

The land, buildings, classrooms, dormitories, furnishings, equipment, and all other facilities shall be sufficient to enable the institution to realize effectively its stated programs and objectives. [77]

Two other emphases, although not found in all statements, concern the importance of (1) long-range master planning of facilities in relation to programs, and (2) the involvement in the planning process of faculty and staff who use the facilities.

E. Financial Resources

In the earliest days of accrediting, one of the four or five standardized requirements was a certain-sized endowment. The regionals have come a long way since those days and no specific figure for endowment, income, or any other fiscal aspect appears in any of the standards. Most agencies, however, do indicate that they consider an institution's financial resources when making an accreditation decision. The major emphasis in all of the standards is upon the adequacy of finances to fulfill institutional goals and support the educational program. Such statements as the following are typical:

The institution, through its governing body, must ensure that programs offered can be supported by the necessary fiscal resources. [78]

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[76] WASC- p. 53.

[77] NE/CVTC (1)- p. 4.

[78] MSA- p. 36.

> The financial resources of a postsecondary institution determine, in large part, the quality of its educational program. [79]

> The adequacy of the financial resources of an institution is to be judged in relation to the basic purposes of the institution, the scope of its program, and the number of its students.[80]

Such items as budget preparation and control, accounting procedures, stability and sources of income, audit reports, financial records, purchasing policies, and others receive varying degrees of attention, depending upon the detail and specificity of the standards.

III. SUMMARY

One of the most vocal critics of accreditation states that the regional associations are"...far from uniform..." and that they "...differ in their standards and procedures."[81] The most marked differences noted in the present study exist in: (1) the format of the standards documents; (2) the degree of detail and specificity in the standards; and (3) the degree to which the standards and guidelines dictate the content and structure the format of the institutional self-study.

A lesser degree of difference is apparent among these agencies as to their terms of accreditation and their conditions for

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[79] NWA- p. 20.

[80] SA/CC- p. 10

[81] James D. Koerner, "Preserving the Status Quo: Academia's Hidden Cartel", Chance, Vol. 3 (March/April, 1971), p. 51.

eligibility for initial accreditation. There is virtually complete agreement that the major purpose of accreditation is improvement of higher education in general and of each individual institution. Throughout the standards, there appears to be no evidence of contradictory philosophies among the nine commissions as to those elements which distinguish an accreditable institution. It should be noted, also, that all regional standards are based essentially upon two fundamental premises; (1) an institution should be evaluated in terms of its own stated objectives; and (2) accrediting standards should be expressed in qualitative rather than quantitative terms.

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MSA Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education

Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education and Standards for Middle States Accreditation, 1977.

NE/CHE New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

Standards for Membership, Institutions of Higher Education, May, 1976.

NE/CVTC New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., Commission on Vocational, Technical, Career Institutions

(1). Standards of Membership for Specialized Institutions of Higher Education Awarding an Associate Degree at the Technical or Career Level, Revised, December, 1976.

(2). Standards of Membership for Specialized Career Institutions Awarding a Certificate or Diploma at the Postsecondary Level, Revised, December, 1976.

NCA North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

Handbook on Accreditation, 1976.

NWA Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Colleges

Accreditation Handbook, 1977 Edition.

SA/CC Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Standards of the College Delegate Assembly, December 10, 1975.

SA/COEI Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Policies and Standards of the Delegate Assembly of the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions, December, 1976.

WASC Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Handbook of Accreditation, Revised August, 1975.

Chapter 3

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITING AGENCIES

There are four national associations which accredit on an institutional basis. They differ from the regional agencies in that their activities are nation-wide. They also differ from the specialized and professional agencies in that, although they are concerned with specialized fields, they grant accreditation almost exclusively to a total institution rather than to any of its units or programs.

The American Association of Bible Colleges (AABC) was established in 1947 primarily for the purpose of improving the quality of Bible and church-vocational education programs offered in two, three, and four year Bible colleges. Today, of the approximate 250 Bible colleges in the United States and Canada, fifty-nine are accredited by AABC and thirty-three have been granted Candidate or Applicant status.

The Association of Independent Colleges and Schools traces its origin back to 1912 although its present title was adopted in 1972. The Accrediting Commission of AICS is recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation to accredit independent post-secondary institutions which offer resident programs in business and office occupations. These include (1) business schools which usually offer one-year programs; (2) junior colleges; and (3) four year senior colleges.

The National Association of Trade and Technical Schools (NATTS) is a voluntary association of private schools. Its Accrediting Commission is a nationally recognized agency for the accreditation of private residence schools which offer occupationally-oriented specialty training in trade and technical careers. The majority of its member institutions offer training programs which culminate in certificates or diplomas, although some offer associate degree programs.

Correspondence or home study has existed on the American educational scene since before the turn of the century. Some of the earlier private schools which offered instruction by correspondence were, unfortunately, of dubious quality. In 1926, encouraged by a Carnegie Corporation study and the National Better Business Bureau, a group of reputable private schools organized the National Home Study Council (NHSC) to establish educational and ethical standards for home study. The Accrediting Commission of the Council was established in 1955 and is today recognized by COPA to accredit private and non-private correspondence schools which range from the elementary grades through graduate schools.

The conditions, standards, and guidelines for accreditation by these four agencies are discussed in this chapter. As in the preceding chapter, all footnotes, unless otherwise indicated, refer to the references listed on page 64 at the close of the chapter. In all such footnotes, agencies are identified by the abbreviations

indicated on page 64.

I. PURPOSES AND CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

A. Purposes

The Association of Bible Colleges is fairly similar to the regional agencies in its statement of philosophy and purpose. It emphasizes the importance of accreditation as a stimulus toward institutional improvement of quality and achievement of stated objectives, as indicated in the following statement:

> The Association will serve its purpose only so long as it stimulates continued improvement among its schools. Accreditation is not so much an end in itself as it is a means of helping schools to achieve their objectives. [1]

The other three agencies, which accredit primarily proprietary schools, are very similar in their statement of purpose. They see their function as two-fold: first, to maintain, stimulate, and improve educational quality; and secondly, to perform a public service through insistence upon proper ethical business practices. The following three statements illustrate the close similarity of purpose of these three agencies.

> Each Council considers its two principal concerns in accreditation to be the improvement of educational quality of the institutions and service to the public. [2]

> A primary purpose is to establish and maintain high educational standards and ethical business practices in its field. [3]

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[1] AABC- p. 16.

[2] AICS- p. 7.

[3] NATTS- The Accreditation Plan (1/11/76) p. 1.

...to promote sound educational standards and ethical business practices in the home study field. [4]

This emphasis upon ethical business practices is unique to these agencies, and is reflected clearly in several of their standards, discussed later in this chapter.

B. Term of Accreditation

There is a wide range in the maximum terms of accreditation granted by these four associations. The Association of Bible Colleges agrees with some of the regionals in its ten year term. AICS, on the other hand, accredits for a maximum of six years and both HATTS and NHSC for five years. As with other agencies, all indicate that accreditation in specific instances may require re-affirmation in a shorter period of time if conditions so warrant.

C. Conditions of Eligibility

A consistent condition for eligibility for accreditation among all four agencies is the duration of institutional operation prior to application. AABC requires a minimum of five years; the other three require at least two years. In addition, AABC requires several indications of stability such as continuity of leadership, reasonably low faculty turnover; sound financial management; and an adequate student enrollment (preferably several hundred).

AICS requires that the principal program of the institution shall be a residence program. It also stipulates that junior colleges,

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[4] NHSC- Accreditation- Objectives and Procedures, p. 1.

in general, should have granted annually at least ten degrees during the three years prior to application and that senior colleges "...shall have graduated at least three four-year classes".[5]

In addition to its requirement of two years of successful operation, NATTS requires an institution to have had at least one graduating class in the longest course it offers in order to apply for accreditation.

II. STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

For the most part, the standards and guidelines of these agencies are similar to those of the regionals in that they are primarily qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. Moreover, quantitative measures when used are generally confined to the standards on educational program and instructional staff, as indicated later in the chapter.

There is considerable difference, however, among the four sets of standards in both their format and content. Those for Bible colleges are lengthy, detailed, narrative, and descriptive statements. They appear to be designed to educate and guide institutions in their self-study processes and, in some respects, almost resemble an elementary text in higher education as they describe fundamental characteristics of quality institutions.

In contrast, the standards of NATTS and NHSC are brief, terse, and succinct. Those of NHSC bear some resemblance to a check-list

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[5] AICS- p. 65.

and are, indeed, accompanied by a check-list on which the visiting evaluation team is asked to rate each item on an Outstanding (O), Satisfactory (S), or Unsatisfactory (U) scale.

Although the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools states that, "It seeks not conformity with minimum requirements but a striving for excellence",[6] many of its criteria are among the most explicit and prescriptive in the group. Several statements are worded to indicate that a certain requirement "shall" be satisfied; that a certain procedure "shall" be utilized; or that "compliance shall be required". In a few instances, absolutes are employed which indicate that accreditation of the institution may be jeopardized by violation of a single standard. The following is among the more strongly worded statements contained in the standards:

> No institution will be accredited where there is evidence that the instructor's work has been reduced to a clerical operation or where the academic freedom of the teacher is impaired. [7]

A. Goals and Objectives

There is consistent emphasis upon the need for clearly defined institutional objectives in published documents. All of the agencies operate upon the same general principle as the regionals, i.e., the institution is evaluated according to its stated objectives. However, AABC, NATTS, and NHSC also indicate certain broad purposes or concepts

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[6] AICS- p. 18.

[7] AICS- p. 45.

which every institution should incorporate within its statement of goals.

It is interesting to note, also, that strong emphasis is placed by these agencies upon the attainment of objectives (outcomes). The following statements are illustrative:

> The final criteria for determining a school's functional effectiveness are the performance of its students and the record of its graduates. Are they consistent with avowed objectives?[8]

> Evaluation of the educational program is based upon the success with which announced objectives are achieved. [9]

> Evaluation of the educational program is based on the announced course objectives and the success with which the objectives are fulfilled. [10]

> Each institution shall make a planned and continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of its educational program in accomplishing the objectives or outcomes upon which its staff and board have agreed.[11]

B. Administration and Financial Management

Two agencies have a separate standard devoted to institutional administration. That of AABC spells out in considerable detail the functions and responsibilities of the governing board, president, and other major administrative officers. In contrast, AICS has a fairly brief statement which emphasizes that, "In evaluating the administration, emphasis shall be placed upon the manner in which functions are performed."[12]

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[8] AABC- p. 19.

[9] NATTS- p. 1.

[10] NHSC- p.1.

[11] AICS- p. 43.

[12] AICS- p. 45.

The administrative aspect which receives most consistent attention, however, is that which deals with financial management. In the AABC standard, such topics as records, reports, fund accounting, budget preparation and control, annuity program, and management of investments are carefully explained in such elementary statements as:

> Disbursements, when properly authorized by the business officer, should be made by prenumbered checks...
>
> All important papers such as securities, deeds...should be kept in the safety deposit box of a bank...
>
> This volume (College and University Business Administration) should be kept on the financial officer's desk for constant use.[13]

It was said earlier that a major purpose of the other three agencies is performance of a public service through attention to financial stability and sound business practices. This two-pronged purpose is generally unique to these agencies. No regional nor specialized/professional agency, for example, includes in its standards a requirement such as the following of the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools.

> All institutions accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools may be required from time to time
>
> 1. to furnish reports designed to reveal data concerning the nature of operations of the institutions under any or all federal and state programs of financial aid and to determine, by way of illustration, the rate of dropouts of students and causes, therefor.
>
> 2. to submit a signed release authorizing the USOE, HEW, and such other agencies as may be appropriate to make available to

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[13] AABC- pp. 35-37.

AICS information needed to verify, confirm, and supplement information reported to AICS by the institution.

3. to provide explanation to AICS any condition apparently indicative of improper, deficient, or questionable practices in the administration of any program of student financial aid by any institution. [14]

C. Instructional Staff

Statements on faculty are usually very generalized. There are, however, a few specific requirements pertaining to faculty qualifications and teaching load or student-faculty ratio.

Faculty Qualifications. Certain agencies indicate minimum qualifications for faculty. AABC statesthat faculty should normally possess at least the first graduate or professional degree beyond the bachelor's level. The institution granting the degree, moreover, is very important to this agency which states in no uncertain terms that,

Degrees listed by faculty members must be from recognized schools of sound standards and practices. In no case will degrees from "diploma mills" be recognized. [15]

The National Association of Trade and Technical Schools is primarily concerned that instructors possess a minimum of two years of practical experience and that they be certified or licensed, where required by law. AICS expects the minimum of a bachelor's degree for faculty in all institutions and adds the following requirements for faculty in junior and senior colleges:

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14 AICS- pp. 46-47.

15 AABC- p. 46.

> At least one-half of the faculty teaching second-year classes shall have the master's degree, LL.B, J.D., C.P.A, or other approved professional equivalents.
>
> Normally, there shall be no teachers of upper division courses without standard master's degrees or the equivalent, and a reasonable number shall have doctoral or other terminal degrees.[16]

Teaching Load and Student-Faculty Ratio. AICS and AABC are the only two agencies in this group which state these requirements in quantitative terms. The minimum requirements of AICS for all schools are as follows:

> The maximum teaching load, including night school, shall not exceed 31 clock hours a week. Where class instruction is used, the student-teacher ratio shall not exceed 30:1; where individual instruction is used, the ratio shall not exceed 15:1.
>
> For junior colleges, the following requirements apply:
>
> Teaching loads shall not be greater than 20 credit hours per week, including evening classes. Consideration shall be given also to the number of clock hours of regularly assigned instruction, which shall not exceed 25 per week, and the number of different preparations required.
>
> For senior colleges,
>
> Normally, teaching loads shall not be greater than 16 standard semester hours per week, or equivalent, including evening classes.
>
> In both situations,
>
> At any one time, no teacher should be assigned to teach in more than three fields of instruction, and preferably in not more than two fields. [17]

Somewhat more generous are the requirements of AABC which stipulate an average teaching load of 12 hours per week which should

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[16] AICS- pp. 63 & 68.

[17] AICS- pp. 49, 64, 67-68.

be reduced proportionately for those faculty members having administrative duties.

Faculty Welfare. With the exception of AABC, agencies in this group devote less attention to general conditions of faculty welfare than do most of the regional and specialized/professional agencies. Conditions of tenure, retirement, fringe benefits, etc. receive no mention in the standards of those agencies which accredit primarily proprietary schools.

D. Educational Program

General Education. The three agencies which have a standard on the educational program consider it important to have a balance between the general education and professional/vocational components. The ratio between the two, of course, varies with the length of the program. AABC states its requirements for general education as follows:

> The five-year Th.B program includes approximately two years of general education. A four-year program should include from one to two years, depending on the degree of specialization in the practical field. A three-year program has correspondingly less. [18]

The two agencies which accredit institutions offering associate degree programs are very similar in their requirements of 16 S.H. (AICS) and 25% (approximately 15 S.H.) (NATTS) in general education. The first defines general education simply as "...those courses covering the major areas of knowledge other than business courses"[19]

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[18] AABC- p. 61.

[19] AICS- p. 62.

and the second offers no definition.

Specialization. It is, of course, the professional or vocational program which receives primary attention in these three sets of standards. The proportion of the program which should be devoted to specialization is indicated as follows:

AABC- 30 S.H. in all programs; 40 S.H. in terminal programs.

AICS- 30 S.H. for associate degree programs; 40% for baccalaureate programs.

NATTS- 50% for academic associate degree programs; 75% for occupational associate degree programs.

Evaluation. In accord with their stated purpose to maintain and improve educational quality, these agencies strongly emphasize the need for periodic evaluation and revision of the educational program, in such statements as the following:

> There is no area of an educational institution that calls for more continuous study than its curriculum and instructional practices. This is particularly true of Bible colleges, which in their devotion to the Christian mission in the world, have developed specialized programs to keep pace with the dynamic progress made in modes of communication. The need to restudy training programs is accentuated in our day because of the rapidity with which industrial, social, technological and educational changes are taking place. [20]

> The faculty shall participate in a system of continuous curricula revision and improvement. Institutions are encouraged to consider curriculum changes designed to fit students' needs as determined by a survey or other fact-gathering procedure, such as community surveys related to educational needs. [21]

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[20] AABC- p. 59.

[21] AICS- p. 44.

Effective procedures are utilized to constantly improve materials and keep them current and up-to-date. 22

E. Students and Student Services

Student admissions is the second major area which reflects clearly the stated purpose of those agencies which accredit primarily proprietary institutions. Virtually all accrediting agencies are, of course, concerned about student admissions. The regionals place emphasis upon the compatibility of admissions policies with institutional objectives and program resources; the specialized/professional agencies are vitally concerned about the quality of student admitted. In contrast, these national institutional agencies are deeply interested in the ethics of recruitment, admission, and tuition policies. They are concerned about ethical recruiting practices; about truthful and accurate advertising and promotional literature used for recruitment purposes; about tuition refunds, cancellations, and collections; and about enrollment agreements which clearly outline the nature of the course and the obligations of both students and the institution.

Other aspects of student services are, of course, mentioned in the standards, particularly by AABC. On the whole, statements are very general and refer to such matters as a counseling and testing program, student records, student evaluation, and others.

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22 NHSC- p. 5.

F. Facilities and Equipment

All four agencies include a major section in their standards on the physical plant and equipment. All statements are very general and resemble those of other agencies in their concern for esthetics, safety, cleanliness, operation and care, and other typical matters relating to this topic. There is no mention of any quantitative specifications in any document.

G. Catalogues and Publications

The third major area in which concern for ethical business practices is reflected is that dealing with the institutional catalogue and publications. Both AICS and NATTS supplement their standards with extensive check-lists of items which the catalogue "must" contain. The two lists are very similar and include, among several others, such items as statement of institutional philosophy and objectives; academic calendar, admissions policies and procedures; tuition and fee payments and refunds; and full descriptions of all programs and courses.

III. SUMMARY

The four agencies discussed in this chapter differ, in the nature and scope of their accrediting activities, from both the regional and the specialized/professional agencies.

The American Association of Bible Colleges accredits institutions offering Bible and church-vocational educational programs.

The remaining three agencies are unique in that they are three of the four agencies [23] recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation which accredit primarily proprietary institutions. Their statements of purpose are virtually identical, i.e., the improvement of educational quality and the maintenance of ethical business practices. This dual purpose permeates throughout the accrediting standards but is probably most strongly reflected in those dealing with (1) administrative and financial management; (2) admission, recruitment, and tuition policies and procedures; and (3) institutional catalogues and publications.

In general, the standards of all four agencies are expressed more in qualitative than quantitative terms. There is, however, considerable variation in the format and degree of specificity and prescription contained in the four documents.

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[23] The Accrediting Bureau of Medical Laboratory Schools, discussed in Chapter 5, also accredits primarily proprietary schools.

REFERENCES

AABC American Association of Bible Colleges

Manual, 1977 Edition.

AICS Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, Accrediting Commission

Operating Criteria for Accredited Institutions, February, 1976.

NATTS National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, Accrediting Commission

Standards for Accreditation, 4/10/76.

NHSC National Home Study Council, Accrediting Commission

Standards for Accrediting Home Study Schools, 1976.

Chapter 4

PROFESSIONAL AGENCIES WHICH ACCREDIT SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES WITHIN A UNIVERSITY OR HEALTH CENTER AND/OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS

Professional accreditation developed concurrently with regional accreditation during the early decades of the twentieth century and was motivated essentially by the same concern for quality. The number of professional schools had increased dramatically in the period following the Civil War. Many were operated for profit and were of very marginal quality. Those incorporated within universities were frequently not much better for they suffered from minimum budgets and low prestige compared to their liberal arts counterparts. The depressing state of professional education in this country at that time is described by one reference as follows:

> In general, it can be said that, with some exceptions, education for the professions near the close of the 19th century was in a sad state. Most of the professional schools were wretchedly housed and almost never in quarters designed for the needs of professional instruction. Their only income was from student fees, which covered the costs of operation and provided a profit for the owners. The entrance requirements were few and low. The majority of students could not have been admitted to colleges requiring entrance tests. [1]

It is generally recognized that the medical profession took the first major step toward correcting this situation. In 1904,

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[1] Lloyd E. Blauch, Education for the Professions, (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1955), p. 11.

the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association assumed responsibility for inspecting medical schools according to certain minimum standards. In 1910, the release of the now-famous Flexner report exposed the sorry state of many medical schools and is generally credited with forcing approximately half of them to close their doors within a very few years. Dentistry followed the lead of medicine with its first published list in 1918 of accredited schools, and law (American Bar Association) issued its first list in 1923. Improvement of quality by professional self-regulation had begun!

Today, there are thirty-nine professional agencies recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation to accredit programs or units in their specialized fields. Eleven[2] of these accredit major divisions of universities or academic health centers as well as some free-standing professional schools. These are discussed in this chapter and are listed alphabetically on pages 101-102 at the close of this chapter. As in the previous two chapters, agencies are identified in the footnotes and in tables by their abbreviations as indicated on pages 101-102.

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[2] It should be noted that there are two associations which accredit law schools. The American Bar Association accredits schools which meet its standards and publishes a list of accredited and non-accredited schools. The Association of American Law Schools accredits for membership in its organization. There is cooperation between them but they operate independently.

I. PURPOSES AND CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

A. Purposes

A summary of a conference of leading accrediting agencies held in 1939 states that,

> The most frequently mentioned purpose in the accrediting procedure is that of providing the public with a list of institutions which, in the opinion of the members of the profession, offer a creditable program. [3]

The article continues by explaining that this purpose serves essentially four clienteles: (1) parents and prospective students interested in choosing a reputable school; (2) university and state officials who need information concerning the quality of programs; (3) philanthropic agencies which wish to determine the quality of institutions requesting grants; and (4) the general public which is interested in the competence of practitioners in the various professions.

Today, this purpose still permeates the standards of many professional agencies. It is, however, complemented by other purposes, among which is continuing improvement of quality. The following statements are illustrative of the modern purposes of professional accreditation:

> The primary purposes of accreditation ... are:
>
> a. To advance the standards of pharmaceutical education in the United States and associated commonwealths.

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[3] American Council on Education, Coordination of Accrediting Activities, (Washington, D.C., October, 1939), p. 36.

b. To describe the characteristics of accredited undergraduate professional programs in pharmacy.

c. To provide for prospective students a dependable basis for the selection of accredited undergraduate professional programs in pharmacy.

d. To provide a basis for inter-institutional relationships.

e. To provide a list of colleges of pharmacy and their accredited undergraduate professional programs for the use of state boards of pharmacy or appropriate state licensing agencies in pharmacy, and other interested agencies and for the interested public.[4]

The Council on Chiropractic Education is a national organization advocating high standards of quality in chiropractic education, establishing criteria of institutional excellence for educating primary health care chiropractic physicians, inspecting and accrediting colleges through its Commission on Accreditation, and publishing lists of those institutions which conform to its standards and policies. [5]

B. Term of Accreditation

As indicated in Table II, the maximum term of accreditation of these agencies ranges from five to ten years. It is interesting to note that theology re-examines an institution every ten years, while optometry, podiatry , veterinary, and chiropractic find it necessary apparently to re-evaluate twice that often. No rationale nor basis for determining the term is offered in any standard. Most agencies indicate, however, that the stated maximum in a particular instance may be reduced for sufficient cause.

There is also variation among these agencies as to their interim requirements for maintenance of accreditation during the

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[4] ACPE- p. 4.

[5] CCE- p. 3.

Table II

Maximum Term of Accreditation Granted by
Eleven Professional Accrediting Agencies

Agency	Maximum Term	Agency	Maximum Term
ABA	7 years	AVMA	5 years
ACPE	6 years	AALS	8 years
ADA	7 years	ATS	10 years
AOA	5 years	CCE	5 years
AOsA	6 years	LCME	7 years
APA	5 years		

stated term. In general, such requirements may be classified as follows:

1. Follow-Up Actions of Accreditation Decisions. Many agencies may specify, at the time an accreditation decision is made, certain follow-up requirements which the accredited unit must meet in order to maintain its accredited status. Most frequently, these are additional reports or, in more serious cases, follow-up visits by evaluation teams or staff members.

2. Annual Reports. The majority of agencies require submission of annual reports. Information requested may be primarily statistical or it may pertain to changes made during the preceding year. Examples of such requirements are the following:

> Records of information on students and faculty shall be sent by the college annually to the Office of Education of the American Osteopathic Association. [6]

> The school must submit information annually on its operation. The information from these reports is used by the Commission on Accrediting

[6] AOsA- p. 1.

in imposing notations, initiating reinspection, or taking other steps necessary to the maintenance of the Association's standards.[7]

Before November 1 of each year, each accredited college will be asked to send a copy of the annual catalog, and to submit a report showing changes made during the preceding year along with certain current data. This report is designed to give evidence of maintenance of the standards for accreditation, and to provide a record of progress made in the development of the educational program of the college.[8]

3. Special Reports. In addition, accredited units may be asked to submit special reports. In general, agencies request in such reports information on (1) actions taken after a specified interval on recommendations of the evaluation team; and (2) major changes made or contemplated which may affect the accreditation status of the unit. An example of each of these types is indicated below:

The Progress Report is a document the Council may require an institution to submit (in addition to its Annual Report) in which the chief administrative officer must state the degree to which the recommendations of the last On-Site Visitation Report have been implemented. This must be a detailed statement addressed specifically to each individual recommendation.[9]

If an accredited school contemplates fundamental changes in its administrative organization, association with the parent institution, curriculum, faculty organization, instructional program, or stated objectives, the Council should be given an opportunity to review the proposed changes before they are adopted.[10]

C. Classifications of Accreditation

The number and type of accreditation classifications also varies considerably among these eleven agencies. For instance,

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[7] ATS- p. 6.

[8] ACPE- p. 5.

[9] AOA- p. 3.

[10] AVMA- n.p.

law (ABA), and chiropractic have only two classifications. The first is for programs or institutions which may not be fully operational and is designated as provisional accreditation in law and recognized candidate for accreditation in chiropractic. This pre-accreditation status is usually granted when evidence is submitted to indicate that the program is designed to meet accrediting standards when it becomes fully operational. The second classification is full accreditation which is granted to programs which meet the requirements of the standards.

In contrast, other agencies have an elaborate accreditation taxonomy. Dentistry, for instance, has a total of seven classifications, although not all are applicable to all programs. Pre-accreditation classifications for not fully operational programs or schools include (1) reasonable assurance, (2) accreditation eligible, (3) preliminary provisional approval, and (4) preliminary approval. Full accreditation may be designated as (1) approval, (2) conditional approval, or (3) provisional approval. Optometry has a somewhat similar system of multiple classifications with three for pre-accreditation status and three for full accreditation status. Other agencies in this group typically have three to five classifications.

Some agencies also make distinctions within a single classification. For instance, probationary accreditation may be either published or unpublished. The first indicates major deficiencies

which, unless corrected, will lead to removal of accreditation. The second applies to programs with minor deficiencies which are expected to be corrected within a short time.

Although the variety in type and number of accreditation classifications employed by these agencies may be confusing to those who are not experts in the field, a more serious cause for misunderstanding lies in inconsistency of nomenclature. For instance, provisional accreditation (or approval) is used by law, veterinary, and medicine to indicate a pre-accreditation classification. In other words, this status is granted to new or developing institutions or programs which evidence potential for becoming accredited when they become fully operational for the length of time prescribed by the agency or when they have graduated their first classes.

In contrast, dentistry and optometry use the same term, provisional accreditation, to denote full accreditation but with serious deficiencies. In both cases, the classification is granted to programs which are too marginal to merit even conditional accreditation and which are usually given a maximum of one year to correct weaknesses before accreditation is withdrawn.

Complete standardization of accreditation classifications among all agencies may be neither desirable nor practical. However, a greater attempt for consistency in both practice and terminology would appear to offer many advantages, especially in clarifying the matter for those institutions and programs affected by such classifications.

D. Conditions of Eligibility

It is difficult to determine common requisites for institutional or program eligibility because of the various classifications of pre-accreditation and accreditation used by these agencies. For instance, duration of program is not a consistent condition of eligibility as was true in the previous chapter, because of the various pre-accreditation classifications awarded by these agencies to developing programs or even to those in the planning stages.

Most agencies do, however, stipulate that the institution must be legally incorporated and that the program must be a component of a recognized institution or system of higher education. In addition, the American Bar Association, American Dental Association (for the dental hygiene program), American Osteopathic Association, American Podiatry Association, and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education require that the institution shall be incorporated as a non-profit institution.The Council on Chiropractic Education does not require, but strongly recommends that, "...a college be incorporated under the laws of the state of its residence as a nonprofit, nonproprietary institution exempt from taxation due to its devotion to educational purposes, and there should be no disbursing of income or assets which inure to the benefit of any private party."[11]

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[11] CCE- p. 5.

II. STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

As was true with terms and classifications of accreditation, there is considerable variation in the terminology used to designate the evaluative instruments. In all, these eleven agencies use five different terms. Five of them refer to their evaluative statements as Standards; three as Requirements; one as Criteria; one as Essentials; and one as Functions and Structure. For the most part, the statements are expressed in narrative form with, of course, variation in their detail and specificity. Four of them supplement each standard with "Guidelines" which are designed to interpret the intent of the standard. Such guidelines are usually more specific and definitive than the statement of principle embodied in the standard.

The agencies also differ in the intent of their standards. Some indicate that their standards are purposefully phrased in broad, general terms in order to permit institutional flexibility and to stimulate continuing improvement. The following statements are illustrative:

> ...accreditation and its self-study procedures should provide stimulation to institutions to insure continued growth and improvement in the teaching program. Accreditation has matured from the original methodology which based the institutional evaluation on specific minimum requirements, such as endowment, size of library, number of academic departments, size of classes and number of credit hours for graduation. While such specificity may have been appropriate for an earlier era, the development of similar standards today would, in essence, evaluate and standardize education on a basis of relatively unimportant factors. The Commission on Accreditation concurs with this view and, therefore,

has developed the Requirements to reflect educational permissiveness within the confines of responsible judgment. [12]

> These standards are written in a time of great uncertainty and change, with new modes of thought and action surfacing each day. They do not purport to have final solutions, or even contain the best route to solving many of our problems. Diverse groups need to be included and consequently a whole spectrum of thought and intent must be embraced. At the same time it is important to open new horizons into the future while preserving the best from the past. The standards are not meant to dictate, rather to challenge; not to close doors, rather to open them. [13]

Not all agencies, however, agree with this philosophy. Podiatry, for instance, is more arbitrary as it explains that its standards contain certain mandates which are indicated by "shall" whereas imperative needs or indispensable items are indicated by use of "must". [14]

At the risk of over-generalization, it may be stated, also, that the standards of these agencies are fairly similar to those of the institutional associations in their emphasis upon qualitative rather than quantitative measures. There are, however, certain exceptions which are noted in the following discussion.

A. Mission and Objectives

These agencies devote somewhat less emphasis to this area than do the institutional agencies. Fewer than half the number of statements contain a separate standard on institutional objectives. Those which do, for the most part, emphasize the same points as the

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[12] ADA (1)- pp. 23-24.

[13] ATS- p. 9.

[14] APA- p. 1.

regional agencies. The chief difference is that, in some instances, they stipulate or suggest basic professional goals which should be included in the institutional statement. For instance,

> The objectives of an approved college of osteopathic medicine which shall be published in each issue of its official catalogue are:
>
> To provide its students with an educational program which will assure their development into competent osteopathic physicians;
>
> To contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the development of the osteopathic contribution to medicine through research programs;
>
> To create opportunities for continuing study for the development of teachers, investigators, and physicians;
>
> To contribute to the community by providing distinctive health care.[15]

B. Organization, Administration, Governance

Most of these professional agencies direct some attention to the governing board, although probably not to the same extent as the regional agencies. They do examine, however, the role, responsibilities, and composition of the board. At least four[16] stipulate that members shall serve without financial benefit or reimbursement and four[17] stipulate that the membership should include public-spirited laymen interested in the objectives of the institution.

Few specifics concerning the governing board are mentioned,

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[15] AOsA- p. 1.

[16] AOsA- p. 1; ABA- p. 3; CCE- p. 21; LCME (1)- p. 4.

[17] AOsA- p. 1; CCE- p. 21; LCME (1)- p. 4; APA- p. 20.

although chiropractic does require that "...control of a chiropractic college shall be vested in a board...of not less than nine members."[18]

A consistent administrative concern is the relationship of the professional school to the university. At least two[19] "require" or "expect" the professional school seeking accreditation to have university or health center affiliation. Four do not require but point up the advantages of such affiliation in the following statements:

> Affiliation between a law school and a University is desirable, but is not required for approval. [20]

> ...schools of optometry will thrive best under university auspices because the resources necessary to support such programs are more readily available in university settings, particularly in the academic health center of a university. [21]

> A medical school has many advantages if it is a division of a university. [22]

> Whenever possible, new colleges of podiatric medicine should be established as part of an academic health center. Independent colleges of podiatric medicine are encouraged to seek affiliation with academic health centers. [23]

It was stated previously that the early professional schools in universities frequently suffered from inadequate financial support and inferior status. It is interesting to note that today these professional accrediting agencies, although they urge university

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[18] CCE- p. 21.

[19] ADA (1)- p. 8; AVMA- n.p.

[20] ABA- p. 4.

[21] AOA- p. 10.

[22] LCME (1)- p. 13.

[23] APA- p. 19.

affiliation, are careful to protect the status and autonomy of the professional school. The following statements illustrate this concern.

> If the law school is affiliated with or a part of a University, that relationship shall serve to enhance the program of the law school...If the University's general policies relating to rank, advancement, tenure, and compensation do not provide adequately for the recruitment and retention of a qualified law faculty, separate policies should be established for the law school. [24]

> Regardless of the organizational structure of the university, the Council is concerned that the college of pharmacy maintains a reasonable degree of autonomy for development of its programs, as defined by the dean and faculty, within the framework of the university's aims and objectives. [25]

> It is expected that a dental education program will be conducted at a level consistent with the standards of scholarship and teaching applied to the programs of other professional schools of the university or college of which it is a part, or with which it is affiliated. [26]

> Whatever its institutional setting, it is expected that an optometric educational program will be conducted at a level consistent with the standards of scholarship and teaching applicable in general in the field of professional health care education... The relationship of the school of optometry to the general administration of the institution should provide for effective, independent programs in optometric education. [27]

> A college of podiatric medicine which is part of an academic health center should have a relationship with the parent institution which allows for an effective, independent program in podiatric medicine. [28]

> In the best interests of both the institution and the veterinary medical school, the latter requires the same recognition and autonomy as other professional schools. [29]

The second major interest in administrative aspects is directed

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[24] ABA- pp. 4-5.

[25] ACPE- p. 11.

[26] ADA (1)- p. 8.

[27] AOA- p. 10.

[28] APA- p. 19.

[29] AVMA- n.p.

toward the dean or major officer of the school. Several standards discuss the qualifications and responsibilities of this office with specific attention to such decanal responsibilities as student admissions, faculty employment, curriculum development, and others.

> ...the dean and faculty of the law school shall have the responsibility for formulating and administering the program of the school, including such matters as faculty selection, retention, promotion and tenure; curriculum; methods of instruction; admission policies; and academic standards for retention, advancement, and graduation of students. [30]

> Positive, constructive leadership by the dean of the college is expected. Analyses of successful college administrations show the significance of the dean's scientific background and scholarly achievements, his interests, his participation in the affairs of pharmaceutical organizations, a progressive interest in the educational process, an understanding of the problems of pharmacists and other health practitioners, cooperation with other university and professional officials and a willingness to assume responsibilities of his position. Chief among these responsibilities are the recruitment and retention of a competent staff, the development and implementation of the instructional, communicative, clinical, and research programs of the college and the sustenance of the visibility on campus of pharmacy and the college of pharmacy. He should initiate programs for recruitment and admission of qualified students and assure adequate teaching facilities, including those outside as well as those within the college of pharmacy. If the dean has been assigned other responsibilities within the university, it is expected that these duties will not diminish his effectiveness in administering the affairs of the college of pharmacy. [31]

C. Instructional Staff

Considerable emphasis is given to this area and focused upon a multitude of factors. Most statements are fairly general but some are very specific. Chiropractic, for instance, stipulates

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[30] ABA- p. 3.

[31] ACPE- p. 11.

that "The faculty shall be organized by departments" and that "Regularly scheduled meetings of the full faculty shall be held..."[32] Areas which seem to receive primary attention are the following:

Qualifications. For the most part, statements of qualifications are general and stress such well-recognized attributes as proper training and experience, clinical competence, productive scholarship, and others. In contrast to the "publish or perish" pressure found in some liberal arts fields today, it is interesting to note that these professional agencies assign a relatively high importance to teaching competence. Their standards emphasize that the faculty of professional schools must not only have professional and research competence, but must also be effective teachers. The following statements are indicative:

> The policy of faculty recruitment should recognize the need in professional education to seek personnel specifically qualified for teaching. [33]

> Faculty shall demonstrate not only academic competence, but also teaching effectiveness, as well as commitment to developing the professional skills of their students. [34]

> Faculty members should have experience or training in educational methodology. [35]

> It is imperative that the members of the faculty have and maintain the capability to be effective teachers. [36]

> They should possess the personality, enthusiasm and skill for effective instruction of students...[37]

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[32] CCE- p. 31.

[33] AVMA- n.p.

[34] ATS- p. 29.

[35] APA- p. 16.

[36] LCME (1)- p. 16.

[37] ACPE- p. 12.

Number. Several of the agencies indicate an interest in the size of the faculty body although they differ in their approach to the subject. An interesting contrast between the general statement of medicine and the arbitrary requirement of law is revealed in the following two statements.

> The determination of the number of faculty needed by a medical school must be based upon the need for a "critical mass" in each discipline and the total responsibilities of the faculty for undergraduate, graduate and continuing medical education, for scholarly pursuits and for service. It is the responsibility of the school to provide a sufficient number of faculty who are either full-time or who have made a finite commitment of time to teaching to make certain that the educational obligations to the student are fulfilled. It follows then, that the number and kinds of faculty will relate to the stated objectives and goals of the school of medicine. [38]

> The law school shall have not fewer than six full-time faculty members, in addition to a full-time dean and a law librarian. [39]

Conditions of Service. There is an interesting difference among the standards in this area. Pharmacy, osteopathy, dentistry, and medicine devote little, if any, attention to conditions of faculty welfare. Optometry states only that "...conditions of faculty service which may strongly influence academic performance will be considered."[40] In contrast, others stress the importance of proper attention to favorable conditions of service in such statements as the following:

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[38] LCME (1)- pp. 15-16.

[39] ABA- p. 11.

[40] AOA- p. 15.

> The compensation paid faculty members should be sufficient to attract and retain persons of high ability and should be reasonably related to the prevailing compensation of comparably qualified private practitioners and government attorneys and of the judiciary...
>
> The law school shall afford faculty members reasonable opportunity for leaves of absence and for scholarly research.
>
> The law school shall afford faculty members reasonable secretarial and clerical assistance.
>
> The law school shall have an established and announced policy with respect to academic freedom and tenure...[41]

> The conditions of employment should be such as to attract faculty members of high ability and competence. These conditions include adequate financial remuneration, including provision for promotion; health care; and retirement for full-time personnel. [42]

> Reasonable security of tenure and attractiveness of position must be assured to maintain stability, continuity and competence of faculty. [43]

> The institution shall support its faculty through such means as adequate salaries, suitable working conditions, and logistical aids. Provision shall be made for attendance at professional meetings and periodic study leaves to encourage continued competence, effectiveness, and productivity. [44]

Faculty Load and Faculty-Student Ratio. Table III summarizes the statements concerning teaching load and faculty-student ratio. It is clear that the majority of these agencies either make no mention of these factors or treat the subject only in general terms. Only the two law associations and chiropractic specify maximum loads; and only the latter indicates a specific ratio (except for dentistry which contains a recommendation for laboratory instruction).

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[41] ABA- pp. 12-13.

[42] APA- p. 17.

[43] AVMA- n.p.

[44] ATS- p. 11.

Table III

Faculty Load and Faculty-Student Ratio Specified in the Standards of Eleven Professional Accrediting Agencies

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
ABA	Not more than (1) an average of 8 scheduled class hours per week, counting repetitions during the same academic period as ½ for this purpose, or (2) an average of 10 scheduled class hours per week, counting repetitions during the same academic period at full value.	Educational program should provide for: (1) study in seminars or by directed research, (2) small classes for at least some portion of the total instructional program.
ACPE	No Mention	No Mention
ADA (1)	No Mention	Traditionally, the Commission has taken the position that it will not establish, nor suggest, specific student-teacher ratios. The Commission is steadfast in this opinion and concurs with the inappropriateness to establish, on a national basis, teaching requirements which, in essence, must be related to the curriculum, physical facilities, and teaching procedures of the school.
(2)	The instructor's student contact hour load, course responsibilities, time for evaluating the student while performing laboratory procedures are considered.	Faculty-student ratio of 1:10 is recommended during laboratory instruction. A ratio of more than 15:1 is considered inadequate for laboratory technique instruction.
(3)	Same as above.	Same as above.

Table III (continued)

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
	(4) Factors considered are... the extent to which: faculty-student ratios in dental hygiene aspects of the curriculum provide for appropriate instruction and evaluation; ratios in classroom sessions allow applications of sound principles of teaching and learning; student contact hours allow sufficient time for class preparation, student evaluation and counseling, development of subject content and appropriate evaluation criteria and methods and professional development.	The ratio of faculty to students during preclinical instruction and practical sessions should accommodate individualized instruction and evaluation of the process as well as end result, and allow a student to progress at his individual pace.
AOA	No Mention	While no student/faculty ratios are specified, it is expected that the teaching personnel will be sufficient in number to meet the objectives of the educational program.
AOsA	No Mention	No Mention
APA	No Mention	No Mention
AVMA	No Mention	No Mention
AALS	Same as ABA	No Mention
ATS	No Mention	No Mention
CCE	Maximum is 15 credit hours, counting two hours of laboratory instruction as a credit hour.	1:15
LCME	No Mention	No Mention

It is interesting to note, also, that the philosophy of dentistry differs according to program. In one document, the Commission indicates that it refuses to establish or even suggest specific ratios. It does not, however, take this position in regard to its programs for dental laboratory technologists or dental assistants.

Full-Time/Part-Time Faculty. The relatively heavy emphasis placed upon the need for an adequate corps of full-time faculty parallels the concern of these agencies for faculty who have demonstrated teaching ability. Most of them recognize that practitioners may make a valuable contribution to the educational program but emphasize that they should be used primarily in a supplementary or enrichment capacity.

> The major burden of the educational program and the major responsibility for faculty participation in the governance of the law school rests upon the full-time faculty members.
>
> Students shall receive substantially all of their instruction in the first year of the full-time curriculum or the first two years of the part-time curriculum, and a major proportion of their total instruction from full-time faculty members.
>
> The proper use of qualified practicing lawyers and judges as part-time faculty members is an appropriate means of enriching the educational program. [45]

> The use of part-time instructors with valuable training and experience should be encouraged but their services should only supplement the full-time faculty. [46]

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[45] ABA- pp. 11-12.

[46] AVMA- n.p.

> The Commission will be concerned...about the proportion of the faculty who devote full-time to the institution. It believes that active practitioners of dentistry, who teach part-time, bring to the dental school a service and a viewpoint of value, which should not be lost. However, it is recognized also that teaching is in itself a profession and that the trend in professional education on the university level is increasingly toward the appointment of qualified persons who devote their careers to teaching and research. The Commission encourages dental schools to retain departmental chairmen on a full-time basis. [47]

> Physicians practicing in the community may contribute significantly to the educational program but do not obviate the need for full-time physician-teachers on the faculty. [48]

D. Educational Program

Not surprisingly, every agency devotes a standard to the educational program, particularly the professional program. In general, considering the fact that the program prepares students for competence in a profession, professional requirements are not as rigid or arbitrary as one would expect. To the contrary, the large majority of agencies state specifically that their standards are designed to promote flexibility, experimentation, and innovation as well as to provide for individual differences among students. The following excerpts from seven documents show strong agreement on this point.

> Institutions are encouraged to recognize differences between individual students by providing flexible curriculum plans so that they may select in part their own course of study. [49]

> ...there is no single curriculum that can be prescribed for the undergraduate period of medical education. [50]

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[47] ADA (1)- p. 12.

[48] LCME (2)- p. 6.

[49] AOA- p. 13.

[50] LCME (1) - p. 4.

The Commission encourages curriculum experimentation, the development of institutional individuality, and the achievement of excellence without the establishment of uniformity. The institution is encouraged to recognize student individual differences by providing flexible curriculum plans so that students may select, in part, their own course of study. One of the major aims of the curriculum should be the development of initiative in the student and growth in his capacity for independent thought and action. [51]

Graduate programs in sacred music should be designed to develop true and creative leaders in all phases of the musical activities of the church. They should be flexible in design, always aiming at the development of the particular strengths and aptitudes of the individual candidate. [52]

Experimentation and innovation in new teaching strategies and in the design of the pharmacy curriculum and special program within the curriculum are expected.

Wherever experimentation and/or innovative programs are undertaken a systematic and valid evaluation of the data should be made and the results made available to other schools of pharmacy. [53]

Each college is encouraged to develop distinctive courses and programs... [54]

The curriculum should permit adjustment to the needs of veterinary medicine as a growing and expanding science; it should be sufficiently flexible to permit adjustments as suggested by experience and advances in knowledge. [55]

Many of the standards, of course, specify the basic areas of content which should be included in the curriculum. These are stated in general terms, however, for not one agency in this group stipulates a quantitative measure as far as the content, sequence, or organization of the curriculum are concerned. Whether this is

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[51] ADA (1)- p. 11.

[52] ATS- p. 38.

[53] ACPE- p. 15.

[54] ACoA- p. 2.

[55] AVMA- n.p.

because many of their programs are at the postgraduate level or because of other factors is difficult to determine, but the fact remains that these agencies are relatively non-prescriptive concerning the specific content and design of the educational program.

Duration of the Program. In contrast, this is an area in which several of the standards become prescriptive as far as the curriculum is concerned. All but osteopathy specify, in quantitative terms, the duration of the program. A few, such as pharmacy and dentistry, recognize that some students may complete the curricular requirements in less (or more) time than the regular program. For the most part, however, the standards of all agencies are stated in unequivocal terms as the following excerpts indicate.

> The minimum length of the professional podiatry curriculum shall be four academic years. An academic year is defined as at least 30 instructional weeks. [56]

> The professional curriculum shall extend over a period of at least four academic years of not less than 32 weeks each, averaging at least 30 clock hours per week. [57]

> A full-time school should require as a minimum for its first professional degree in law the successful completion in residence of at least ninety full weeks of work consisting of at least 1,080 class hours of at least 50 minutes each, without regard to the organization of the school year into semesters or quarters. [58]

> The curriculum shall be presented over a minimum period of eight semesters or the equivalent for a total of not less than 4200 hours. [59]

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[56] APA- p. 10.

[57] AVMA- n.p.

[58] AALS- p. 14.

[59] CCE- p. 29.

> The educational program of an approved medical school must include a minimum of 32 months of planned required and elective activities. [60]

> ...the law school shall require, as a condition for graduation, the completion of a course of study in residence of not less than 1200 class hours, extending over a period of not less than ninety weeks for full-time students, or not less than one hundred and twenty weeks for part-time students. [61]

E. Students and Student Services

Every agency has a separate standard on students and/or admissions. These deal with a variety of student services and activities including admissions, student records, financial aid, tuition refunds, recruitment, orientation, health services, morale, counseling, and others. Without question, the area which receives primary attention is admissions.

Admissions. Professional accrediting agencies are very interested in student admissions, particularly in regard to the quality and number of students admitted.

The specificity in admission prerequisites which characterized some standards in the past has, however, virtually disappeared. Some agencies indicate the level of preparation required for admission but none designates a specific grade point average, test score, or formula. To the contrary, several urge that admission requirements should be flexible and based upon a constellation of factors including quality of previous work, character, professional

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[60] LCME (1)- p. 12.

[61] ABA- p. 8.

aptitude, standardized test scores, and others. They indicate that the matter of admissions is an institutional prerogative and responsibility but also that the institution should be prepared to justify its procedures and policies in the light of its resources, programs, and student performance. The American Dental Association appears to strike a reasonable balance when it assigns to institutions the responsibility for admissions but, at the same time, indicates that it will not abdicate its responsibility for the maintenance of quality.

> The Commission's rationale in removing the specificity in admission requirements was based on the premise that greater flexibility should be allowed admissions committees in order to recognize and promote alternative procedures for accepting candidates. For example, advanced placement credit procedures and the possibility of experimenting with an integrated preprofessional and professional program were two concepts which do not dilute the admission standards but were prohibited by the previous Requirements. By eliminating the previous restriction, dental schools will be in a position to devise specialized student programs and develop different curricular approaches for the preprofessional and professional course of study.
>
> The Commission is relying on the judgment of the individual dental school admissions committees to establish specific admission requirements and to select appropriate candidates...
>
> The Commission will continue a study of the characteristics of incoming students to insure that quality of accepted students is being maintained. Further, the Commission will require annual reports from each dental school concerning student performance. [62]

No agency places a quota on the number of students admitted but several urge that this number be controlled according to the institution's facilities and resources. The following is typical:

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[62] ADA (1)- p. 17.

> The number of students enrolled in a veterinary medical school should be in keeping with physical facilities, clinical accessions, organization, and the number and qualifications of the school's faculty and administrative personnel. [63]

The medical profession indicates that the number of students which may be admitted is an institutional prerogative but states, also, that it may specify the number of students which may be enrolled at each level. To what extent it does this is not, of course, revealed in the standards. The following statement, however, in principle is an interesting contrast to those of some allied health fields (see page 137) which indicate that, at the time of evaluation, they will specify student capacity which may not be exceeded without their prior approval.

> The number of students that can be supported by the education program of the medical school and its resources, as well as the determination of the qualifications that a student should have to study medicine, are proper responsibilities of the institution...
>
> The academic, physical and financial resources of the school, and the availability of qualified students, limit the number of students that can be effectively educated by the faculties of a school of medicine. These critical resources include the number and variety of faculty, the number and size of classrooms and laboratories, adequate office and laboratory space for the faculty, and the availability of an adequate spectrum of clinical resources sufficiently under the control of the faculty to insure the breadth and quality of bedside and ambulatory clinical teaching.
>
> The need for shared resources for graduate students, or for other students within the university for which the medical school is responsible, should be considered when determining the number of medical students for whom the faculty can be responsible. The size and variety of programs of graduate medical education, both as a responsibility and as a supplement to the teaching program, and responsibilities for continuing education, patient care, and

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[63] AVMA- n.p.

research, must be carefully considered in determining the number of medical students that is appropriate for a school.

As part of the accreditation process, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education may, after considering the adequacy of the resources available within and to the medical school, indicate a maximum number of students who may be enrolled at each level.[64]

Transfer Students and Advanced Standing. Most of the standards contain some discussion on the acceptance of transfer students. Concerns touched upon in the various statements include:

1. Compatibility of program

Advanced standing may be granted to students for work done prior to admission. The increasing diversity in medical school curricula and the greater integration of the total curriculum require that transfers between medical schools be individually considered so that both school and students will be assured that the courses previously pursued by the students are compatible with the programs they will enter. Otherwise, supplementation of the students' program may be necessary after they have transferred. [65]

2. Quality of accepted work

For courses accepted for advanced standing as prerequisite to the pharmaceutical curriculum, no grades below C should be considered ordinarily to meet requirements. [66]

3. Limitation upon amount of work accepted

...a minimum of one academic year should be required for graduation from the accepting college. [67]

...not more than 50 percent of the requirements of advanced time credit for graduation may be accorded advanced credit to students presenting credentials from other than osteopathic professional schools. [68]

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[64] LCME (1)-pp. 5 & 18.

[65] LCME (1)-p.6.

[66] ACPE- p. 16.

[67] ACPE- p. 16.

[68] AOsA- p. 2.

4. Conditions of admission

Admission or re-admission may be granted a law student who has been previously disqualified for academic reasons, upon an affirmative showing that he possesses the requisite ability and that his prior disqualification does not indicate a lack of capacity to complete his studies at the admitting school. In the case of admission to another law school this showing shall normally be made by letters from the dean or faculty of the school previously attended. [69]

In no case shall consideration for advanced credit be given to such a student in the event that he is ineligible for readmission to his previous college. [70]

5. Status of previous school

...evidence...that the work was done in a chiropractic college acceptable to the Committee on Admissions of the college...[71]

A member school may grant a student academic credit ("advanced standing") for work successfully completed at another member school or, much more cautiously, at a non-member law school approved or provisionally approved by the American Bar Association. [72]

Ordinarily credits from another accredited college of pharmacy, for which a grade of C or better has been earned, should be accepted without examination. [73]

F. Library

In general, these professional associations exhibit keen interest in the library. Virtually all of them, of course, are concerned about the adequacy and relevancy of the collection. In addition, they address such factors as space utilization, staff competence, budgetary support, convenience of access, and others. Some standards contain relatively brief, general statements of which the following is typical.

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[69] ABA- p. 15.

[70] AOsA- p. 2.

[71] CCE- p. 26.

[72] AALS- p. 14.

[73] ACPE- p. 16.

Adequate library facilities are essential to a sound program of veterinary medical education and research. The library should be established as a part of the veterinary medical school; it should be well housed, conveniently located, and available for the use of students and faculty at all reasonable hours. It should be administered by a professionally trained or experienced librarian and should be adequately sustained both for operation and for the purchase of current periodicals and other accessories of veterinary medical importance. [74]

In contrast, the two law associations go into considerable detail in their examination of the library. The American Bar Association includes a list of basic references which must be part of the collection. It also specifies that the law library shall accommodate at least 50% of the student body if the school is exclusively a day school; 35% if it is exclusively an evening school; and 50% of the larger if it is both. [75] The Association of American Law Schools is more stringent in its requirement that seating capacity shall accommodate 65% of the student body (or of the more numerous of its divisions, if it maintains separate sessions for full-time and part-time students) at any one time. [76]

Several agencies are concerned about the qualifications and status of the professional school librarian. Podiatry[77] and pharmacy[78] indicate that the librarian should have full faculty status. Law is the only agency which states explicitly that, "The selection and retention of the law librarian shall be by the dean

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[74] AVMA- n.p.

[75] ABA- p. 20.

[76] AALS- p. 19.

[77] APA- p. 24.

[78] ACPE- p. 13.

and faculty of the law school."[79]

6. Facilities and Equipment

Standards on physical facilities are general, qualitative, and similar to those of the institutional agencies in their concern that facilities are well-maintained and adequate to meet the requirements of the program and the needs of students and staff. The single attempt at quantification is made by optometry. Its standard includes a "guideline for space standards" which indicates the minimum number of square feet for such aspects as classrooms, faculty offices, library (stacks, archives, microfilm, etc.), student lockers, and others. The standard states, however, that these specifications represent neither minimum nor optimum requirements but rather guidelines for a facility adequate to support the educational program.

Clinical and Laboratory Facilities. Many of these agencies rely upon on-campus and off-campus laboratory and clinical facilities. There is considerable difference in the attention they devote to the adequacy of such facilities as well as to arrangements for their supervision and control by the professional school. Pharmacy, for example, discusses the matter in a single, brief paragraph.

> Arrangements should exist between the college and outside agencies for carrying out the clinical teaching program in appropriate inpatient and outpatient environments such as

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[79] ABA- p. 18.

community pharmacies, extended care facilities, health maintenance organizations, community clinics, health and welfare agencies and hospitals. [80]

Dentistry, on the other hand, spells out some of the more detailed aspects of affiliating with off-campus facilities.

A laboratory in the community may be used as a primary facility when it is geographically accessible to the campus, if standards specified for program facilities are met and:

1. there is a formal agreement between the educational institution and agency or institution providing the facility.

2. the dental technology program administrator retains authority and responsibility for instruction and student assignments,

3. all students receive instruction and practical experience in the facility,

4. policies and procedures for operation of the facility are consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the educational program,

5. availability of the facility accommodates the needs of the program, and

6. a two-year notification of termination of the contract is required to assure that instruction will not be interrupted. [81]

H. Financial Resources

Concern with financial resources is evidenced in virtually all documents. The focus of concern is different, however, from that of the two groups discussed previously. The regionals are concerned with adequacy of finances to support the educational program; the national institutional agencies with sound and ethical business practices. These professional agencies are concerned that their programs receive adequate support from parent institutions. They also emphasize that support should not come from a single source,

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[80] ACPE- p. 13.

[81] ADA (2)- p. 21.

particularly student tuition and fees, as was true in the early days when many professional schools were forced to rely solely upon student fees to cover their operating costs. It is obvious that, although student tuition and fees to professional schools appear to be rising steadily, they are not, according to these accrediting agencies, sufficient to support a quality program.

> It is felt that an institution depending upon tuition monies for more than 80% of its total educational and general expense is in a precarious position. [82]

> If tuition is a substantial source of the law school's income, the school is faced with a potential conflict of interest whenever the exercise of sound judgment in the application of admission policies or academic standards and retention policies might reduce enrollment below the level necessary to support its program. [83]

> The college should acquire considerable support from various sources other than student fees and services from clinics and hospitals. [84]

> The school of medicine should seek its operating support from diverse sources. [85]

> Consideration will be given to the adequacy and certainty of the income from endowments, from appropriations and other sources, and to the relation of the income from fees and charges of all descriptions to the total budget. [86]

III. SUMMARY

Eleven professional agencies which accredit major divisions of universities or academic health centers as well as free-standing

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[82] CCE- p. 47.

[83] ABA- p. 4.

[84] APA- p. 22.

[85] LCME (1)- p. 6.

[86] ADA (1)- p. 8.

professional schools were examined in this chapter. Interesting similarities and differences exist among them. There is a wide range of variation in their terms and classifications of accreditation. For instance, theology accredits for a period twice as long as several others, and dentistry has seven classifications of pre-accreditation and accreditation status compared with others which have two categories.

At the risk of over-generalization, it may be stated that the majority of standards are expressed in qualitative, general, descriptive style. In general, the two law agencies seem to be among the more traditional and conservative with their specific quantitative measures in several areas. The standards of podiatry and chiropractic are also fairly prescriptive as they specify minimum requirements and mandates which must be met.

In contrast, the standards of dentistry reflect a more progressive philosophy of accreditation in their use of qualitative criteria and their emphasis upon institutional responsibility and initiative. This is also generally true of optometry, with the exception of its detailed "guideline" for space standards. The standards of both agencies are fairly similar and, in several instances, the wording is identical.

It should be noted that, in spite of certain constraints which would appear to be inherent in programs preparing for a profession,

the majority of agencies in this group specifically indicate that they encourage programmatic flexibility, innovation, and experimentation.

REFERENCES

ABA American Bar Association

Approval of Law Schools, Standards and Rules of Procedure, Amended, 1977.

ACPE American Council on Pharmaceutical Education

Accreditation Manual, Seventh Edition, January 1, 1975.

ADA American Dental Association, Commission on Accreditation of Dental and Dental Auxiliary Educational Programs

(1). Procedures for Evaluation, Requirements and Guidelines for Dental Education Programs, January, 1975.

(2). Requirements and Guidelines for Accredited Dental Laboratory Technology Education Programs, August, 1975.

(3). Requirements and Guidelines for Accredited Dental Assisting Education Programs, August, 1975.

(4). Requirements and Guidelines for Accredited Dental Hygiene Education Programs, August, 1975.

AOA American Optometric Association, Council on Optometric Education

Manual of Evaluation Requirements and Guidelines: Professional Optometric Degree Programs, July, 1976.

AOsA American Osteopathic Association, Office of Osteopathic Education

Predoctoral Osteopathic Education, April, 1977.

APA American Podiatry Association, Council on Podiatry Education

Criteria and Guidelines for Colleges of Podiatric Medicine, August, 1975.

AVMA American Veterinary Medical Association, Council on Education

Essentials of an Acceptable Veterinary Medical School, July, 1975.

AALS Association of American Law Schools

Association Information, February, 1977.

ATS Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada

Procedures, Standards, and Criteria for Membership, 1976.

CCE Council on Chiropractic Education

Educational Standards for Chiropractic Colleges, 1977.

LCME Liaison Committee on Medical Education of the Council on Medical Education, American Medical Association and the Executive Council, Association of American Medical Colleges

(1). Accreditation of Schools of Medicine: Policy Documents and Guidelines, June, 1973.

(2). Programs in the Basic Medical Sciences, December, 1973.

Chapter 5

PROFESSIONAL AGENCIES WHICH ACCREDIT PRIMARILY UNITS WITHIN A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

Interest in professional accreditation accelerated rapidly in the second, third, and fourth decades of the century with a resultant increase in the number of specialized accrediting bodies. According to one reference[1], by the close of the 1920's, several of the agencies discussed in this chapter such as landscape architecture, library science, and music were conducting accrediting activities. Others such as chemistry, engineering, forestry, and social work followed suit in the 1930's.

Today, the trend toward increase in number of accrediting groups continues although at an abated pace. Some of the agencies discussed in this chapter, for instance, such as the National Association of Industrial Technology, have become recognized accrediting groups only within the last few years.

It is important to note, also, that some of these agencies were professional organizations which were not originally established with accreditation intent but which assumed this function at a later date. The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, for instance, was organized in 1916 to address certain problems of

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[1] William K. Selden and Harry W. Porter, Accreditation: Its Purposes and Uses, (Washington, D.C., The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, 1977), p. 2.

the profession. It developed guidelines of excellence for its members which eventually became accreditation standards. Others, such as the National Architectural Accrediting Board and the Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration were formed by sponsoring organization/s expressly as accrediting agencies.

It should be noted, also, that some of these agencies collaborate with other associations in conducting their accrediting activities. The most extensive collaborative network is headed by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA) which collaborates with thirty-three professional organizations (and several of their review boards such as the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences, Joint Review Committee for Respiratory Therapy Education, and others) to grant accreditation by the American Medical Association to twenty-three allied health programs.

In all, there are twenty-eight professional agencies which accredit primarily programs, departments, divisions, or schools within a college or university. It should be recognized, of course, that this category overlaps with the previous one since a few agencies examined here also accredit free-standing, single-purpose institutions. In general, however, they are included in this chapter if the bulk of their accrediting activities is directed toward units within a parent institution.

An alphabetical list of the agencies, their identifying abbreviations, and their documents which were used as primary references is included at the close of the chapter. As in the three previous chapters, all footnotes and tables refer to these references unless otherwise indicated.

I. PURPOSES AND CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

A. Purposes

It was stated in the previous chapter that a long recognized purpose of accreditation is the identification of programs or institutions which warrant public confidence. This purpose receives heavy emphasis among the agencies in this group. There is, however, a philosophical difference among them as to the baseline they use for evaluation and subsequent identification of accredited units. Some agree with the regionals in their philosophy that a program should be evaluated in terms of its own stated purposes. The American Council on Education for Journalism, for instance, states that,

> A school should be evaluated in terms of its stated objectives. A small school that claims to prepare students for reporting assignments should be judged on the basis of its claims. A school that claims to offer programs in several of the various phases of journalism and mass communication should be judged on the basis of its claims. If the objectives prove to be either too limited or too diffuse, the Council may consider the school's program beyond its purview. [2]

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[2] ACEJ- p. 7.

A different philosophy, however, is held by the majority of these professional agencies which state that a program is evaluated according to the extent that it meets or exceeds national standards of quality. The following statements are indicative of this point of view.

> To identify to the public, prospective students, educational institutions, professional societies, potential employers, governmental agencies, and state boards of examiners, the institutions and specific programs that meet minimum criteria for accreditation. [3]

> To assure the public that particular institutions-- those named in the Annual List-- offer programs for the preparation of teachers and other professional school personnel that meet national standards of quality. [4]

> The Committee on Accreditation seeks both to protect the public interest and to provide guidance for library educators. Prospective students wishing to make a wise choice of schools, librarians recruiting professional staff, the general public concerned about the kind of library service it receives and supports-- all of these have a right to know whether a given program of library education is of good standing. By identifying those programs meeting recognized standards, the Committee offers such groups, which collectively represent the public interest, a means of quality control in the professional staffing of libraries. [5]

> The interest of the American Speech and Hearing Association in accreditation is based upon the belief that all professional fields that provide services to the public have an obligation to ensure, insofar as possible, that services provided by its members are of high professional quality. One of the most effective means by which this obligation can be met is to establish appropriate standards of education and training for its incoming members, as well as standards for continuing professional education and to identify those educational institutions that maintain adequate standards. [6]

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[3] BCPD (1)- p. 1.

[4] NCATE- Introduction

[5] ALA- pp. 2-3.

[6] ASHA- p. 1.

In addition, agencies in this group agree with all others that a major concern of accreditation is the improvement of educational quality. This theme runs consistently throughout all documents.

B. Term of Accreditation

As Table IV indicates, there is a very wide range in the term of accreditation granted by these agencies. Two of them grant accreditation for as short a term as one year; two others for two years. The most common term is five years although six of them believe that a period twice that long is sufficient for their purposes.

As was true of agencies in previous categories, these agencies also have various requirements for maintaining accreditation during the stated term such as submitting additional reports, hosting interim visits, or others.

C. Classifications of Accreditation

Table V indicates the various designations of pre-accreditation/ initial accreditation and full accreditation status granted by these agencies. All classifications indicated for any one agency, however, do not necessarily apply to all the programs which it accredits.

It is interesting to note that these agencies use a total of fourteen different categories of accreditation. Some of these duplicate those of agencies in the previous three chapters; others

Table IV

Normal Term of Accreditation Granted by
Twenty-eight Specialized Accrediting Agencies

Agency	Normal Term	Agency	Normal Term
ABMLS	6 years	CEPH	5 years
ACEHSA	4 or 5 years (most programs are accredited for less than full term)	CORE	1-5 years
		CSWE	10 years
AACSB	10 years	ECPD	2,4, or 6 years
ACS	3 years	FIDER	5 years
ACCE	5 years	NAAB	5 years (may be extended to 7 years based upon interim visit)
ACEJ	6 years		
ADtA	3-5 years	NAPNES	2 or 5 years
AHEA	5 years	NAIT	1,2,4,or 6 years (most common is 4)
ALA	4-6 years		
CAHEA	5 years	NASA	5 or 10 years (if 10, interim report is required)
APTA	5 years		
APsA	5 years	NASM	10 years
ASLA	5 years	NCATE	10 years
ASHA	7 years	NLN	8 years (for associate and higher degree programs) 6 years (for diploma programs)
AsCPE	10 years		
		SAF	10 years

do not. The inconsistency in the use of the term "provisional accreditation" noted in the previous chapter exists also among these agencies. Some such as psychology, public health, and allied health use it to designate developing programs which demonstrate potential for full approval when they become completely operational. Others, such as the National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service and the American Society of Landscape Architects use it to designate a program too deficient to warrant full accreditation. Interior Design uses it for both.

D. Conditions of Eligibility

As in the previous chapter, the various classifications of preaccreditation and accreditation make it difficult to discern consistency in the many different conditions of eligibility required by these agencies. In general, however, it was possible to note two fairly common requirements.

Several of these associations stipulate some sort of time requirement in terms of the number of years of operation. This varies from a specific number of years such as two required by the Accrediting Bureau of Medical Laboratory Schools to a more general requirement that the program must "...have been in operation long enough to permit an objective evaluation..."[7] A more common determinant of time, however, is the number of graduating classes which the program has produced. This varies from one class[8] to

Table V

Classifications of Pre-Accreditation/Initial Accreditation and Full Accreditation Status used by Twenty-eight Specialised Accrediting Agencies

Agency	Pre-Accreditation and/or Initial Accreditation								Accreditation					
	Affiliated Status	Preliminary	Developmental	Provisional	Initial	Candidate	Reasonable Assurance	Associate Membership	Probationary	Provisional	With Qualifications	Conditional	Membership	Accreditation
ABMLS									X					X
ACEEDA														X
AACSB									X					X
ACS									X					X
ACCE						X			X					X
ACEJ				X*					X					X
ADLA			X						X					X
AHEA									X					X
ALA												X		X
CAEEA				X					X		X			X
APTA									X		X			X
APsA				X										X
AOLA					X					X				X
ASHA									X					X
AsCPS					X									X
CEPH				X					X					X
CORE		X				X								X
CSWE						X			X					X
ECPD						X	X							X
FIDER				X						X				X
SAAB														X
SAPHEE										X				X
SELT						X								X
SHSA						X			X	X				X
SHSH								X	X				X	
SCATS														X
SLH					X									X
SRP	X													X

* Applies only to programs applying for initial accreditation which do not meet standards but there is assurance deficiencies will be rapidly corrected.

at least three classes[9] and at least one agency is specific in stating that "...the program must have graduated a minimum of six students, at the master's level, in the area for which accreditation is sought, within the three-year period prior to submitting application for accreditation."[10]

A second requirement of several of these agencies is that the program must be housed in an institution accredited by a regional or "otherwise appropriate" agency. At least two indicate that withdrawal of institutional accreditation shall result in a review or withdrawal of specialized accreditation.

> If the sponsoring institution is accredited by either a regional accrediting association or another appropriate agency such as the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, it shall be considered as meeting the location requirement. The sponsoring institution (college or university) must have at least CANDIDATE status for accreditation by the accrediting association in order to be eligible for APTA accreditation...At anytime that institutional accreditation is withheld or withdrawn, accreditation of the physical therapist program will similarly be withheld or withdrawn. [11]

> If any school which is a member of this Association is dropped from the accredited list by its State Board of Education or its regional accrediting agency, it shall have its status reviewed by the Association. [12]

E. Scope of Accreditation

There is a distinct difference in the scope of accrediting activities. Some agencies accredit a unit such as a department,

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[9] CORE- p. 4.

[10] ASHA- p. 2.

[11] APTA- p. 18.

[12] NASM- p. 9.

division, or school. When this is the case, all programs within the unit are considered within the accreditation purview. For instance, home economics states that, "The policy of the CPD is to accredit home economics units coveidering all programs offered by the unit."[13]

On the other hand, several agencies accredit each program or sequence individually as indicated in the following statements.

> To accredit educational programs rather than institutions, for it is well recognized that programs of quite different quality may sometimes be found at the same institution.[14]

> Instead of accrediting schools, NAAB now accredits programs, since schools may offer several programs leading to a first professional degree as well as programs which do not lead to a professional degree.[15]

> It is the institution's prerogative to request for accreditation programs and degree levels of its choice. The institution is not required to seek accreditation for all eligible programs.[16]

> Only sequences (programs) are accredited, not entire departments, divisions, schools, or colleges. Only those sequences actually accredited may be so designated.[17]

As these statements indicate, when programs are the accreditable units, the institution has the prerogative of requesting accreditation for those programs, at those levels, which it seeks. There is, however, one agency which differs from this general policy. The

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[13] AHEA- p. viii.

[14] NCPD (1)- p. 1.

[15] NAAB- p. 4.

[16] NCATE- Introduction

[17] ACEJ- p. 6.

American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business accredits programs at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Accreditation of one, however, is contingent upon the other, according to the following statement,

> A member school offering a masters program(s) in business or administration shall attain masters accreditation status within five years following the date of undergraduate accreditation or inception of the masters program(s) as a condition for continued undergraduate accreditation.
>
> (Member schools currently offering both undergraduate and masters programs in business and administration, but holding only undergraduate accreditation shall attain masters level accreditation by July 1, 1981 as a condition for continued undergraduate accreditation. Member schools for which the July 1, 1981 date poses undue hardships may submit to the Continuing Accreditation Committee by July 1, 1977 a proposal for extension of this deadline...)[18]

As far as could be determined, this is the only agency which defines its accreditation scope in terms of program but which makes accreditation of one level of program dependent upon another. Whether this removes any of the "voluntary" nature of the accreditation function would seem to be a pertinent question.

II. STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Of the twenty-eight agencies, sixteen use the term "Standards" to refer to their minimum requirements for accreditation. Eight refer to them as "Criteria"; three as "Essentials"; and chemistry titles them "Objectives and Guidelines".

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[18] AACSB- p. 14.

As would be expected, there is great variation in this large group as to the format of the standards. Journalism and forestry are among the most concise in the group. Others, such as physical therapy, home economics, dietetics, and social work are much more detailed. Some standards have accompanying guidelines, interpretations, or illustrations; others do not.

The same type of continuum noted in previous categories from broad, descriptive, qualitative standards to more prescriptive, quantitative statements is applicable to the agencies in this group. Some, such as architecture, public health, and library are as qualitative and flexible as any in the entire study. On the whole, however, it seems safe to generalize that agencies in this group tend to be more specific and quantitative in their accrediting standards than do those in other classifications. This is particularly true in the standards on faculty, educational program, and admission requirements as noted in the discussion on these topics.

A. Goals and Objectives

Standards on objectives generally duplicate those of other agencies in their emphasis upon (1) clear and explicit definition; (2) availability in published form to students, faculty, and the general public; (3) appropriateness and consistency with general professional goals; and (4) necessity for continuous review.

B. Governance, Administration, Organization

Three basic concerns are reflected in the standards, namely: (1) the status and relationship of the professional unit to the parent institution; (2) the unit's internal administrative structure and operation; and (3) the qualifications and responsibilities of the unit director.

The first concern is identical to that of the professional agencies discussed in the previous chapter. The following statements indicate clearly that specialized accrediting agencies are deeply interested in the identity, autonomy, and financial support of the professional unit.

> Institutional support of the administration of the construction educational program requires that the construction education unit is accorded status within the institution comparable to that of other units of similar size and function, with regard to finances, staffing, teaching loads, promotion in rank and salary, appointment on the institution's policy-making committees, program priorities and other academic affairs. [19]

> The library school should be an integral but distinctive academic unit within the institution, and its autonomy should be sufficient to assure that the content of its program, the selection and promotion of its faculty, and the selection of its students are controlled by the school within the general guidelines of the institution. [20]

> The home economics unit is accorded status within the institution comparable to that of other units of similar size and function, with regard to finances, staffing, teaching loads, promotion in rank and salary, appointment on the institution's policy-making committees, program priorities, and other academic affairs. [21]

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[19] ACCE- p. 5.

[20] ALA- p. 9.

[21] AHEA- p. 1.

> A school of social work shall be so organized within the educational institution that it has a clear identity. It shall have responsibility and freedom to (1) evolve curriculum and guide its development and modification; (2) select and recommend appointment of faculty; (3) present and defend, to appropriate university authorities, a budget in harmony with its objectives; and (4) administer the budget as approved. [22]

> Within the framework of university rules and regulations, a school of public health shall have prerogatives respecting academic policies affecting students, faculty, curricula, and public health degree requirements to assure the integrity of the educational program. [23]

> The forestry school should be an integral but distinctive academic unit within the institution. Within the general guidelines of the institution, it should have sufficient autonomy to determine the content of its program, and the selection and promotion of its faculty. [24]

A second focus of concern is the internal administration of the professional unit. Standards indicate that accrediting groups are interested in such predictable factors as democratic governance, committee structure, flexibility of organizational design, adequate communication, involvement of faculty in policy determination, and others.

The third concern parallels that of the previous group of agencies, i.e., the position and person who provides leadership to the professional unit. Qualifications and responsibilities are spelled out in varying detail throughout the documents. Speech and Hearing, for instance, is general in its requirement that the program director "...must be trained in speech pathology, in audiology.

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[22] CSWE (1)- p. 22.

[23] CEPH (1)- p. 3.

[24] SAF- n.p.

or in speech and hearing science."[25] In contrast, dietetics is specific in requiring that the program director must be a registered dietitian with at least one and preferably three years of full-time practitioner experience as a dietitian/nutritionist in a health care facility, school, agency, or similar organization and must hold at least a master's degree in dietetics or a closely related field.[26]

Some agencies not only outline qualifications for the position but they maintain the right to approve the appointment of a specific individual. When a change of directors occurs, they require the institution to forward the new director's credentials to them and, if they approve, accreditation is continued. The requirement of physical therapy is stated as follows:

> If the Director of the educational program is changed, immediate notification shall be sent to the APTA Department of Educational Affairs. The curriculum vitae of the new director, giving the details of his training, education and experience in the field, must be submitted and, if the new director's credentials are in order, accreditation of the program will be continued. [27]

Some of the standards for programs accredited by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation contain a similar statement, although CAHEA's 1978 revision of the Recommended Standard Format for Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program states only that "prompt notification" and a "curriculum vitae" shall be forwarded if there is a change in the program director, medical director, or education coordinator. [28]

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[25] ASHA- p. 15.

[26] ADIA- pp. 1-2.

[27] APTA- p. 23.

[28] CAHEA (1)- p. 7.

A recurring criticism of accrediting groups is that they usurp authority which legally belongs to the institution's governing board and administration. Approval of specific personnel appointments usually rests with the governing board. Whether a requirement such as that quoted above represents an infringement upon institutional autonomy is a question which merits consideration by the accrediting community.

C. Instructional Staff

As was true of previous categories, this group of agencies is vitally concerned about the faculty. Virtually all devote a specific standard to this area. A few, such as music, public health, and architecture contain relatively brief, general statements compared to most which go into considerable detail concerning such items as faculty qualifications, responsibilities, benefits, and others. The importance which accreditation places upon faculty competence is clearly evident in such statements as,

> The heart of any educational program is the faculty. All other matters are secondary to a competent, qualified, and forward-looking staff that can give an overall scholarly atmosphere to the operation. [29]

> The competence of the faculty is the crucial factor in teacher education, not only for the quality of instruction which is provided, but also for the total atmosphere in which the programs are implemented. Above all, the quality of teacher education programs offered, and the degree to which such quality is maintained, depend primarily on the faculty. [30]

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[29] NCPD (1)- p. 4.

[30] NCATE- p. 6.

> The major asset of an institution is its faculty: their experience, their preparation, their commitment to the family and the profession and their performance. [31]

Qualifications. Among the numerous qualifications mentioned by these agencies, it is possible to note nine which receive the most consistent emphasis. A rough tabulation divided these into three groups according to the attention they receive among all agencies.

Group One. The group of faculty traits mentioned most frequently by these specialized agencies includes: (1) academic preparation; (2) scholarly productivity; (3) professional experience and/or certification; and (4) continuing liaison with the profession.

Several agencies indicate a general level of expectation of academic preparation. Some are specific in indicating the number or proportion of faculty who should hold terminal degrees.

> Chemists with earned doctoral degrees in chemistry, or with equivalent experience, should comprise at least sixty percent of the teaching faculty. [32]

> As a measure of the faculty's teaching, research, applied knowledge, and overall scholarly capability, at least 80 percent of the full-time equivalent academic staff...will possess qualifications such as the Ph.D, DBA, JD, or LLB, masters with professional certification such as the CPA, and appropriate masters degrees (or the equivalent). As one further measure of the faculty's research capability, the percent of full-time academic staff holding the PhD, DBA, or "other appropriate doctoral degree" shall be not less than the sum of 40 percent of the minimum number of faculty required at the undergraduate level... and not less than 75 percent of the minimum number of faculty required at the graduate level...[33]

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[31] AHEA- p. 5.

[32] ACS- p. 8.

[33] AACSB- p. 27.

> The faculty for each advanced program leading to the doctorate includes at least one full-time person who holds the doctorate with specialization in the field in which the degree is offered, and at least three persons who hold the doctorate in fields which directly support each degree program. [34]

Not all agencies, however, are interested in the doctoral degree. Social work, for instance, points out that the MSW should be recognized as the terminal degree in hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure decisions. [35] Art goes a step further and assumes a position somewhat that of faculty advocate in its statement that,

> NASA has long recognized the Master of Fine Arts as the appropriate terminal degree for teachers of studio subjects. At the same time, some of the most highly qualified artist-teachers may hold only the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Others, equally qualified, may not hold any academic degrees, since many leading schools of art did not award degrees to their graduates until recent years. For this reason, NASA urges that in special cases, where appropriate, the holding of any particular academic degree be waived as a necessary criterion and condition in actions on salary, promotion, rank and tenure for studio faculty members. [36]

Group Two. Those faculty qualifications which receive second most frequent mention are: (1) competency in the area of specialization, and (2) teaching effectiveness. Apparently, these professional agencies agree with many in the previous chapter in their emphasis upon te ching competence in a professional school:

Group Three. The third group of qualifications mentioned with some frequency includes: (1) interest in curricular experimentation; (2) ability to work with students; and (3) community

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[34] NCATE- p. 13.

[35] CSWE (2)- n.p.

[36] NASA- p. 9.

service. Also, one agency feels that an important qualification of a faculty member is the "ability to learn".[37]

As a final word on faculty qualifications, it should be noted that at least one agency requires that all personnel changes be reported within thirty days.

> All accredited institutions are required to report the names of full-time and part-time instructors, listing their educational qualifications, affiliations, and other data the Bureau may require regarding the faculty members. Any changes in faculty shall be reported to the Bureau within 30 days.[38]

Since this agency does not indicate the effect, if any, of such changes upon the accreditation of the institution, it is difficult to determine whether the question raised in regard to reporting changes in personnel (pp. 117-118) is applicable here also.

Faculty Load and Faculty-Student Ratio. Table VI indicates specifications on faculty load and faculty-student ratio. It is interesting to note that quantitative measures are applied more frequently to ratio than to load. Twelve (almost half the total number) indicate a specific ratio for at least some programs while only seven have a definite load maximum.

Full-time/ Part-time Faculty. The same concerns expressed in Chapter 4 were emphasized by these accrediting agencies which recognize the contributions of part-time faculty but which also

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[37] SAF- n.p.

[38] ABMLS (1)- p. 16.

Table VI

Faculty Load and Faculty-Student Ratio Specified in the Standards of Twenty-eight Specialized Accrediting Agencies

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
ABMLS	Teaching load greater than 30 hours a week is considered excessive. No more than 25 of the 30 hours may be in class recitation or lecture. (1&2)	Classroom ratio of students to instructor may not exceed 30 to 1. In laboratory work, ratio should not exceed 20 to 1.
ACEHSA	No Mention.	No Mention.
AACSB	Not more than 12 credit hours per week. Assignment of responsibilities other than teaching should result in downward adjustment of load. No individual should have more than 3 different courses per week, nor in more than 2 fields.	1 FTE faculty member: 400 undergraduate student credit hours per term. 1 FTE faculty member: 300 graduate student credit hours per term.
ACS	No more than 15 contact hours per week including laboratory supervision. Generous teaching load credit must be given for time spent in directing experimentation and student research.	No Mention.
ACCE	Where not in conflict with institution's requirements, maximum is 12 hours in lecture courses- 9 is preferable. Maximum is 18 hours for laboratory or studio courses.	18 students per instructor is considered optimum.
ACEJ	No Mention.	Not exceed 1:15 in laboratory performance courses.

Table VI (continued)

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
ADiA	No Mention.	Minimum ratio of FTE faculty to enrolled students in professional phase of program (junior-senior level) is 1:10.
AHEA	Comparable to faculty in other units-- load evidences recognition of total professional responsibilities and services.	No Mention.
ALA	Allocation and distribution should ensure quality of instruction. Should be distributed to take into account faculty's participation in student counseling and other institutional and professional activities.	No Mention.
CAHEA	No Mention.	Not to exceed 2 students to each full-time certified cytotechnologist.(3) For clinical experience, not to exceed 2:1.(6) At least one Medical Assisting faculty member for each 25 students currently attending classes.(7) Should not exceed 20:1 in medical laboratory techniques courses; a more favorable ratio is preferred.(9) An acceptable student/technologist ratio in the student laboratory should not exceed 20:1, a more favorable ratio is preferred... Clinical laboratory assignments should not exceed 2 students to each instructor.(10) Student laboratories should have ratio of 10:1. Clinical laboratory assignments should not exceed 2:1.(13)

Table VI (continued)

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
		Programs having more than 20 students shall have at least 2 full-time faculty members plus 1 full-time equivalent faculty member. In clinical phase of the program, at least 1 clinical instructor to every 5 students. (20 & 21)
APTA	Approximate those recommended by AACP- 12 S.H. or 18-22 contact hours is considered maximum load.	Not to exceed 1 to 16 for laboratory activities.
APsA	No Mention.	Should ensure that graduate education is appropriately personal and relevant to the research and practicum needs of the student.
ASLA	No Mention.	1 FTE faculty: 14 FTE students.
ASHA	Should not carry a load that is greater than that traditional for faculty duties in parent institution.	Minimum should approximate 1 full-time teaching staff member at the master's level to six full-time master's level majors.
AsCPE	No Mention.	No Mention.
CEPH	No Mention.	Adequate to provide instruction, research supervision, and service/ practice supervision.
CORE	No Mention.	Consistent with general ratio of institution.
CSWE	Should include in addition to teaching and research, time for duties associated with general educational and administrative operation of school and institution.	No Mention.

Table VI (continued)

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
ECPD	Compatible with existing climate for research and professional development.	Student-faculty ratio (in engineering technology) should not exceed institutional ratio for science- related areas.
FIDER	18 contact hours is maximum for studio work. (2,3,4)	12 to 18 students to 1 design critic is optimum for studio courses.(2) 24 students to 1 design critic is maximum for studio courses.(3) 15 to 18 students to 1 design critic for studio courses.(4)
NAAB	Recognition given to advancement of faculty's professional development; community responsibilities; participation in professional organizations; student advising and administrative tasks; participation in institutional administrative and committee affairs.	No Mention.
NAPHES	No Mention.	No Mention.
NAIT	Determined and assigned on a basis that promotes quality instruction.	No Mention.
NASA	Not more than 18 contact hours per week for studio teachers. Teachers of lecture courses should have loads of not more than 8 or 9 contact hours. Loads of those having administrative duties should be appropriately reduced.	Ratio should not be in excess of 20 to 1 and preferably closer to 15 to 1.
NASM	Should be such that faculty	No Mention.

Table VI (continued)

Agency	Faculty Load	Faculty-Student Ratio
	members are able to carry out teaching duties effectively. Lecture type courses are weighted with studio private lessons on 2:3 ratio (2 hours of classroom instruction equals 3 hours of private instruction).	
NCATE	Should make provision for maximum load, permit adjustments for nonteaching duties, and allow time for planning involved in carrying out assigned responsibilities. Load for graduate faculty lower than for undergraduate faculty.	No Mention.
NLN	No Mention.	No Mention.
SAF	Allocated according to interests and competencies of individual faculty members and should be such that quality of instruction can be maintained. Should take into account student counseling, institutional and professional activities and self-improvement.	For teaching, ratio should not exceed 1:20. For counseling, ratio between advisees and professional faculty should not exceed 30 to 1.

stress that a nucleus of full-time faculty is needed to conduct a quality program.

Number and Diversity. Table VII summarizes the statements of these agencies on the number and diversity of faculty. Requirements in number are less arbitrary than on faculty-student ratio or faculty load although six agencies mandate a minimum number of faculty. The statements of several agencies on faculty diversification are interesting. Several urge variety in terms of academic preparation and experience; psychology encourages heterogeneity in socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural background. Two others are interested in balanced age groupings.

Faculty Welfare. Attention to faculty welfare is noticeable among these agencies. Their protective attitude in insuring that professional faculty enjoy at least the benefits accorded to those in other divisions is clearly evident in such statements as the following:

> The faculty has rank, status, salary, and other benefits commensurate with its educational experience, assigned responsibilities, and/or professional competence and comparable to other faculty in the institution. [39]

> The salary schedule for the library school's faculty and executive officer should be comparable to that of other schools within the institution. Salaries within the library school should be equitably established according to the education, experience, responsibilities, and competencies of faculty members. [40]

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[39] AAHEA- p. 5.

[40] ALA- p. 11.

Table VII

Faculty Number and Diversity Specified in the Standards of Twenty-eight Specialized Accrediting Agencies

Agency	Number	Diversity
ABMLS	No Mention.	No Mention.
ACEHSA	Each program shall have a minimum of two full-time faculty members.	No Mention.
AACSB	Adequate to meet commitments of the school.	No Mention.
ACS	At least the equivalent of 4 full-time staff members.	No Mention.
ACCE	Commensurate with number and type of courses offered.	Faculty as a whole should present diversification of education and background and provide balance in age groupings.
ACEJ	Depends upon scope of sequence offerings.	No Mention.
ADiA	Minimum of 2 full-time equivalent faculty in professional phase of program.	No Mention.
AHEA	Commensurate with number and type of courses offered and students served, and other professional responsibilities.	Faculty as a whole presents diversification of education and background, represents various educational institutions, and provides balance in age groupings.
AIA	No Mention.	Faculty as a group should evidence diversity of background.
CAHEA	Number should be commensurate with most effective	No Mention.

Table VII (continued)

Agency	Number	Diversity
	teaching and learning practices.(11,12,7)	
APTA	Sufficient number to ensure program quality.	Collectively, faculty should have complementary strengths and varying areas of expertise.
APsA	Faculty large enough to provide student-faculty ratio which ensures that graduate education is appropriately personal and relevant to the research and practicum needs of students.	To degree possible and feasible, faculty should represent diversity of each specialty, should hold doctorates from different universities, and should represent some heterogeneity in socio-economic, cultural and ethnic background, and professional experience
ASLA	At least the equivalent of 3 full-time faculty.	Faculty should represent a range of professional interests and a mix of experiences encompassing teaching, research and practice. Faculty should not be composed primarily of graduates from the same school so that a wider range of academic viewpoint is made available to students.
ASHA	Sufficient in size to meet instructional, clinical, research, and advisement responsibilities.	No Mention.
AsCPE	No Mention.	No Mention.
CEPH	Sufficient in size to achieve mission of the school.	No Mention.
CORE	Adequate to meet needs of program.	No Mention.

Table VII (continued)

Agency	Number	Diversity
CSWE	Adequate to meet teaching and research requirements.	No Mention.
ECPD	Determined by program enrollment and division of labor in such activities as teaching, laboratory supervision, direction of graduate work, extension or continuing education studies, and active participation in professional and technical societies.	Diversity of backgrounds.
FIDER	At least 3 full-time faculty. (5)	Recommended that faculty be composed primarily of graduates from a variety of schools so that a wider range of academic viewpoint is available to students. Should represent range of professional interests and a mixture of experiences encompassing teaching, research, and practice. (5)
NAAB	No Mention	No Mention
NAPNES	No Mention.	No Mention.
NAIT	No Mention.	No Mention.
NASA	No Mention.	No Mention.
NASM	No Mention.	No Mention.
NCATE	No Mention.	No Mention.
NLN	Number of faculty are sufficient to meet	Undergraduate and graduate nursing educational preparation represents various academic

Table VII (continued)

Agency	Number	Diversity
	purposes and objectives of program. (4)	institutions. (4)
SAF	School must employ a minimum of eight full-time faculty members who participate in program leading to first professional degree.	No Mention.

The teaching staff should enjoy professional rank and salaries commensurate with those of their colleagues in related fields. [41]

...the institution must provide that the faculty has rank, status, salary, and other benefits commensurate with its educational experience, assigned responsibilities, and/or professional competence and comparable to other faculty in the institution. [42]

The personnel policies for faculty members of the school are those in effect for other faculty members in the institution in regard to appointment, responsibilities, academic rank, tenure, salaries, promotion, and recognition of professional competencies. [43]

D. Educational Program

All agencies are, of course, vitally interested in the educational program. Areas most frequently addressed include curricular content, balance, design, and sequence; flexibility and provision for individual needs and capabilities; independent study

[41] ASLA- p. 73.

[42] ACCE- p. 9.

[43] NLN (4)- p. 8.

and research; clinical and laboratory experiences; program development and evaluation; and provision for experimentation and innovation. Those in which comparisons seem to be most meaningful are the following:

Curriculum Content. Agencies in this group vary widely in their concern with the content of the curriculum. A few are fairly prescriptive and specific in their requirements for a professional program. Industrial Technology, for instance, specifies minimum-maximum percentages of a Baccalaureate degree program which must be devoted to six areas of concentration. Construction Education is similar in its guidelines for minimum number of semester hours for various components. ABMLS "suggests" model curriculums for medical assistants and medical laboratory technicians in terms of subjects, lecture hours, and laboratory hours. Several CAHEA programs list topics or units of instruction which the curriculum should include. Many agencies have specific requirements for clinical or practicum experiences.

In contrast, others are more general in their content requirements. Some, such as health services administration and home economics indicate only large areas of emphasis while others such as nursing (NLN), library, and public health devote primary attention to basic curriculum principles or to the development of behavioral competencies.

Curriculum Balance. Several agencies which accredit baccalaureate programs are interested in the balance between general education and professional education. There are, however, interesting differences among them. Industrial Technology is among those with the lowest minimum (15-30%) in general education. In contrast, journalism suggests that approximately 75% of the program should be devoted to courses in the arts and sciences. Others such as business, art, teacher education, and music specify that approximately one-third to one-half should be in general education subjects.

Curriculum Sequence. At least four agencies specify that professional course work should be concentrated in the last two years of the four year program, as indicated by the following statements:

> The professional education phase of the program, which includes the professional dietetic courses, is concentrated in the junior and senior years, following completion of most of the basic sciences and other liberal-general education courses. [44]

> A school should concentrate its professional courses in the last two years of a four-year program, and should not offer more than two full-year professional courses (or equivalent) below the junior year. The purpose of this standard is to permit the student to acquire a basic background in the liberal arts and sciences. [45]

> An undergraduate school of business should concentrate its professional courses in the last two years of a four-year program,

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[44] ADiA- p. 6.

[45] ACEJ- p. 8.

and should offer only a limited amount of work below the junior year. The objective of this is to permit the student to acquire a foundation of work in the basic arts and sciences. [46]

The major in nursing is concentrated at the upper-division level. [47]

Program Evaluation. In Chapter 2 it was stated that there is a steadily increasing interest in evaluation of the educational program through the assessment of outcomes. Although no agency in this group has a separate standard on outcomes, many emphasize very strongly that evaluation of the program should include follow-up studies of students. The following statements reflect the keen interest of these accrediting bodies in the assessment of program effectiveness in terms of the competence of graduates.

The ultimate criterion for judging a teacher education program is whether it produces competent graduates who enter the profession and perform effectively. An institution committed to the preparation of teachers engages in systematic efforts to evaluate the quality of its graduates and those persons recommended for professional certification. The institution evaluates the teachers it produces at two critical points: when they complete their programs of study, and after they enter the teaching profession. [48]

A measure of the quality of any academic program is the success of graduates in practice; therefore, there has to be communication with alumni and periodic follow-up of graduates to provide assessement of:

The relevance of their preparation in relation to the positions they hold in the profession.

Their contribution to the profession.

Their awareness of the importance of continuing education in contributing to professional growth and development. [49]

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[46] AACSB- p. 30.

[47] NLN (4)- p. 14.

[48] NCATE- p. 9.

[49] ACCE- pp. 23-24.

There must be evidence that the program evaluates its outcomes.

There must be evidence that the majority of master's degree graduates of the program enter and remain in the profession of rehabilitation counseling.

There must be evidence that master's degree graduates of the program are contributing to the profession. [50]

The record that graduates are making in the profession or in further academic study in other institutions is a factor to be considered in accrediting. An institution applying for accreditation of a program should be prepared, if possible, to produce records of graduates over a period of at least three years. [51]

The professional performance of graduates should be considered as a major item in the accrediting evaluation. [52]

There should be procedures by which the professional attainments of graduates are recorded, with resulting data analyzed and utilized in all aspects of academic planning. [53]

Emphasis is placed upon follow-up studies of graduates. These studies should be conducted on a regularly scheduled time basis, possibly every 2-3 years, with accurate records maintained. Included should be reports of promotion of graduates to positions of greater responsibility. The percentage of graduates going on to graduate school and their success in graduate school is significant. Industry's reaction to the graduates as employees must be favorable. An evaluation of the baccalaureate industrial program should be made by its graduates. Their reactions and recommendations should be considered for future improvement of the program.[54]

Effectiveness of the educational program must be documented through periodic review of all aspects of the program. Significant aspects may be assessed through questionnaires, surveys, interviews or other means with faculty, students, graduates of the program, and employers of the graduates...Records of scores on external certifying examination(s) of graduates of the three preceding years must be considered in the self-evaluation. [55]

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[50] CORE- p. 8.

[51] ECPD (1)- p. 4.

[52] ACEJ- p. 9.

[53] ASLA- p. 73.

[54] NAIT- p. 6.

[55] CAHEA (13)- p. 15.

E. Students and Student Services

The concerns of these specialized agencies relating to students and student services duplicate those of other agencies discussed previously. There is little doubt that, of all aspects of student life, admissions is an over-riding concern.

Admissions. Many statements are very general and either indicate such basic prerequisites as a high school diploma or undergraduate degree (or equivalent) or they require only that admission practices and procedures be compatible with program objectives and consistent with institutional policy. Several contain non-discriminatory clauses and at least one urges special consideration for disadvantaged students.

> Special attention may be given to the admission of disadvantaged students within the framework of the policies of the institution. This includes programs which allow special admissions, tutorial service, and supportive follow-up such as in programs for the disadvantaged, economic opportunity programs, and others. [56]

Although some agencies suggest certain quantitative or qualitative measures which may be used in the selection process, only one agency in this group (or in the total group) mandates a specific admissions formula.

> When the combination of indicators used is the GMAT score and the overall or upper division GPA prior to graduate admission, the candidate should have a total of at least 950 points based on the formula: 200 times the overall GPA plus the GMAT score; or at least 1000 points based on the formula: 200 times the upper division GPA plus the GMAT score.

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[56] AHEA- p. 18.

When the combination of indicators is different from that suggested in the preceding paragraph, the burden of proof is on the institution to demonstrate that its combination assures a comparable quality of entering students. [57]

Several agencies are interested in the number of students admitted. However, only the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation indicates that it and its affiliated organizations or review boards will specify at the time of evaluation the student capacity for certain programs and that this may not be increased at any time without prior approval.

The accreditation granted to a college, university or hospital-based program will specify the student capacity. Prior approval by the CAHEA through NAACLS is required for an increase... Forms for documenting evidence in support of increased student capacity are available from the NAACLS Executive Office...[58]

Approval to expand enrollment may be requested from the CAHEA through NAACLS. The request must be accompanied by justification with supporting information reflecting adequate support of additional students in terms of clinical material, space, personnel, and equipment/instruments. [59]

Accreditation is granted for a maximum number of students per year. That maximum shall not be exceeded without permission of the CAHEA...The number of students admitted to a class should not exceed the approved number, regardless of the anticipated attrition rate. [60]

At no time should the number of students exceed the total number for which the program is authorized according to the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology, nor may the number of students concurrently assigned to the clinical affiliate exceed the number for which the affiliate is authorized.[61]

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[57] AACSB- p. 21.

[58] CAHEA (13)- p. 4.

[59] CAHEA (6)- p. 4.

[60] CAHEA (10)- p. 3.

[61] CAHEA (18)- p. 2.

It is interesting to note that these requirements, as expressed in the accrediting standards, are more arbitrary than those for medical schools (see page 92).

Rights, Responsibilities, and Welfare. Concern with student rights and privileges is evident in several of the standards. Some agencies in the health fields are particularly concerned that students shall not be exploited by being used as substitutes for paid personnel.

> Students in the Medical Laboratory Technician program must not be used as substitutes for, or replacements of paid laboratory personnel. Students can be awarded a scholarship, but should not be expected to work in return for this. If they are paid for any work, this should be for work outside normal classroom hours, and they should not be allowed to work excessive hours, to the detriment of their educational program. [62]

> The program shall not substitute students for paid personnel to conduct the work of the clinical facility...It is the responsibility of the sponsoring institution to ensure that students assigned to an affiliating clinical facility are engaged in planned activities designed to complement the academic phase of the program, that each student is adequately supervised and that students are not exploited. [63]

> Students are not to displace regular employees to meet work loads of a department, but have learning experiences under appropriate supervision. [64]

Others are interested in insuring that student rights and freedom are protected through proper adjudication of student grievances. Still others are interested in encouraging student

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[62] CAHEA (9)- p. 8.

[63] APTA- p. 22.

[64] ADiA- p. 7.

participation in policy determination and decision making.

F. Library

Agencies in this group are interested in the same basic aspects of the library as agencies discussed previously, and there is no need to repeat them here. Some have several pages detailing the requirements of the library. In contrast, the American Library Association summarizes the major needs of the library in the following succinct paragraph.

> Instructional resources, services, and facilities should be provided and organized to meet the needs of the specific programs. The general and special collections, staff, and services of the institutional library should be adequate to meet the general educational purposes and needs of the library school. The collection of materials in the field of library science should be adequate in scope, size, content, and availability to support the goals and objectives of the school. [65]

An often expressed criticism of accrediting agencies is that they stipulate the number of volumes which should be in the library instead of concentrating on more substantive issues. In view of this criticism, it is interesting to note that only two agencies in this large group have quantitative library requirements in their accrediting standards. Chemistry stipulates that holdings shall include "...at least twenty current chemistry periodicals with good back runs..."[66] while the statement of art is more detailed:

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[65] ALA- p. 12.

[66] ACS- p. 9.

> The library should adequately support the undergraduate program with no less than 5000 volumes on art and related subjects, plus at least 25 periodicals and should be staffed by an adequate number of professionally qualified personnel. The slide collections should provide at least 10,000 items. [67]

G. Facilities and Equipment

Most of the standards contain statements on physical plant, facilities, and equipment. As was true with those agencies examined in the previous chapter, these associations are very concerned about off-campus and on-campus clinical, practicum, and laboratory experiences and the facilities and arrangements provided for their implementation. In addition, certain agencies specify specialized equipment needed in order to conduct a quality program.

H. Financial Resources

Statements on finances are relatively brief and emphasize primarily the importance of adequate support for the professional program from the parent institution. A few point out that their particular fields of specialization may entail proportionately higher costs than other programs. The following statement is typical:

> The cost per student for professional forestry education is greater than the cost in many other educational programs. Such differences should be recognized by the institution in financial aid to students, and reflected in the funding. [68]

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[67] NASA- p. 11.

[68] SAF- n.p.

III. SUMMARY

Not surprisingly, there is wide variation within the large number of specialized agencies examined in this chapter. They differ in many respects: in the term, scope, and classification of accreditation status; in their philosophy of accreditation; and in the format and content of their evaluative standards and guidelines.

Although there are many exceptions, standards of agencies in this group appear to be more prescriptive and more quantitative than many examined in previous chapters. Quantification is probably most heavily concentrated in the standards dealing with faculty and educational program. Prescription varies widely among and within the standards, but there are a few instances in which requirements become fairly rigid mandates.

This group of agencies agrees with others that a fundamental purpose of accreditation is the improvement of educational quality. These specialized agencies emphasize, however, that accreditation performs a critical public service by identifying and publicizing those programs and institutions which merit public confidence. Some base their accreditation and identification upon the relationship of the program to its stated objectives. A greater number indicate that accreditation signifies that the program/institution meets or exceeds minimum national standards.

REFERENCES

ABMLS Accrediting Bureau of Medical Laboratory Schools

(1). Medical Assistant Education Programs. Third Edition. 1976.

(2). Medical Laboratory Technician Education Programs, 1976.

ACEHSA Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration

Criteria for a Graduate Program in Health Services Administration, July 1, 1976.

AACSB American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, Accreditation Council

Policies, Procedures and Standards, 1976-77.

ACS American Chemical Society, Committee on Professional Training

Objectives and Guidelines for Undergraduate Programs in Chemistry, September, 1972.

ACCE American Council for Construction Education

Standards and Guidelines for the Accrediting of Construction Education Programs at the Baccalaureate Level, n.d.

ACEJ American Council on Education for Journalism, Accrediting Committee

Education for a Journalism Career, 1976-77.

ADIA American Dietetic Association, Commission on Evaluation of Dietetic Education

Essentials for Coordinated Undergraduate Programs in Dietetics, November, 1976.

AHEA American Home Economics Association, Council for Professional Development

Accreditation Documents for Undergraduate Programs in Home Economics, n.d.

ALA American Library Association, Committee on Accreditation

Standards for Accreditation, Effective January 1, 1973.

CAHEA American Medical Association, Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation

(1). Recommended Standard Format for Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program, 1978.

(2). Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for the Assistant to the Primary Care Physician, 1971.

(3). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Cytotechnologist, January, 1978.

(4). Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for the Electroencephalographic Technician, June, 1973.

(5). Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for the Electroencephalographic Technologist, June, 1973.

(6). Essentials and Guidelines for Educational Programs for Histotechnology, Draft, March, 1978.

(7). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Medical Assistant, January, 1977.

(8). Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for Medical Assistant in Pediatrics, June, 1972.

(9). Essentials (with Guidelines) of an Accredited Educational Program for the Medical Laboratory Technician (Associate Degree Program), 1977.

(10). Essentials (with Guidelines) of an Accredited Educational Program for the Medical Laboratory Technician (Certificate Program), 1977.

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(13). Essentials (with Guidelines) of an Accredited Educational Program for the Medical Technologist, 1977.

(14). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Nuclear Medicine Technologist, June, 1976.

(15). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, June, 1973.

(16). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Ophthalmic Medical Assistant, June, 1975.

(17). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Physical Therapist, February, 1977.

(18). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Radiation Therapy Technologist, December, 1976.

(19). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Radiographer, June, 1978.

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(22). Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for the Specialist in Blood Bank Technology, 1977.

(23). Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for the Surgeon's Assistant, June, 1974.

(24). Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for the Operating Room Technician, December, 1972.

APTA American Physical Therapy Association

Handbook of Information Concerning the Accreditation Process for Physical Therapy Education Programs, Revised 9/76.

APsA American Psychological Association, Committee on Accreditation

Accreditation Procedures and Criteria, January, 1973.

ASLA American Society of Landscape Architects, Council on Education

Nurturing Quality in Landscape Architectural Education, n.d.

ASHA American Speech and Hearing Association, Education and Training Board

Accreditation of Professional Education Programs in Speech Pathology and Audiology, June, 1977.

AsCPE Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc.

Standards and Procedures for the Accreditation of CPE Centers and Clusters to Offer Designated Programs of CPE and for the Certification of CPE Supervisors, 1977.

CEPH Council on Education for Public Health

(1). Manual for Accreditation of Graduate Schools of Public Health, 1975.

(2). Standards for Accreditation of Public Health, Community Health, Preventive Medicine, Community Medicine Graduate Programs in Health Science Schools other than Schools of Public Health, Draft Statement, 1977.

CORE Council on Rehabilitation Education, Commission on Standards and Accreditation

Manual of Accreditation, 1974.

CSWE Council on Social Work Education

(1). Manual of Accrediting Standards for Graduate Professional Schools of Social Work, Revised, April, 1971.

(2). Standards for the Accreditation of Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Social Work, Effective July 1, 1974.

ECPD Engineers' Council for Professional Development

(1). Criteria for Accrediting Programs in Engineering in the United States, n.d.

(2). Criteria for Accrediting Programs in Engineering Technology, 1975/76.

FIDER Foundation for Interior Design Education Research

(1). Accreditation in Interior Design, n.d.

(2). Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Community and Junior College Programs in Interior Design, n.d.

(3). Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Professional School Programs in Interior Design, n.d.

(4). Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Baccalaureate Programs in Interior Design, n.d.

(5). Standards and Guidelines for the Accrediting of Graduate Interior Design Education Programs, n.d.

NAAB National Architectural Accrediting Board

Criteria and Procedures, October, 1977.

NAPNES National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service, Inc.

Practical Nursing Education, Criteria and Procedures for Accreditation, Pamphlet Number 3, 1973.

NAIT National Association of Industrial Technology

Accreditation of Baccalaureate Industrial Technology Programs, Revised as of October, 1976.

NASA National Association of Schools of Art

The Bulletin, Revised August, 1973.

NASM National Association of Schools of Music

Handbook, 1977.

NCATE National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

Standards for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, Adopted 1970.

NLN National League for Nursing

(1). Criteria for the Evaluation of Diploma Programs in Nursing, Fourth Edition, 1975.

(2). Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing Leading to an Associate Degree, Fourth Edition, 1976.

(3). Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Practical Nursing, Third Edition, 1976.

(4). Criteria for the Appraisal of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs in Nursing, Fourth Edition, 1977.

SAF Society of American Foresters

Standards and Procedures for Accrediting Institutions for the Teaching of Professional Forestry, Effective July 1, 1976.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has attempted to determine and compare the major areas of emphasis, commonality, and difference in the accrediting standards of those accrediting agencies currently recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. A total of ninety sets of standards and guidelines used by fifty-two agencies to accredit institutions or components of institutions of higher education was examined in depth. Except for consideration of certain purposes and conditions of accreditation, the study focuses entirely upon the content of the standards and guidelines.

It should be emphasized at the outset, that the diversification which exists among these statements of standards makes it difficult to arrive at valid generalizations and conclusions. Nomenclature, format, and style vary widely. Some are called "standards"; others "criteria" or "essentials". Some are brief, concise statements; others are lengthy and detailed. Some describe qualities which characterize superior institutions or programs; others prescribe minimum standards which "shall" or "must" be met. Some employ only qualitative terms; others rely to a greater extent on quantitative measures. Some depend heavily upon the subjective judgment of an evaluation team; others structure evaluation upon more objective evidence. Some are non-directive concerning the institutional

or program self-study; others have specific requirements as to its format and content.

There is also considerable variation among the agencies as to terms of accreditation. Normal terms range from one to ten years with virtually all agencies indicating that evaluation may be scheduled more frequently in individual situations when warranted by existing conditions.

In addition, agencies vary in the mechanisms they use to assure the maintenance of quality during the stated term of accreditation. For the most part, institutions are required to submit various types of reports (annual, special, follow-up, periodic, status, progress, etc.) and/or to host interim visits by evaluation teams or staff members.

There are decided differences in the number and type of accrediting classifications. Some agencies, such as teacher education, architecture, and health services administration, have a single classification. An institution/program is either accredited or it is not accredited. In contrast, dentistry has a total of seven classifications although all are not used for all programs.

Exclusive of accreditation <u>actions</u> (accreditation withheld, suspended, withdrawn, deferred, etc.),there are sixteen different categories of pre-accreditation/initial accreditation and accreditation.

Pre-accreditation/initial accreditation status includes: (1)

affiliated status; (2) preliminary accreditation; (3) developmental accreditation; (4) provisional accreditation; (5) initial accreditation; (6) candidate status; (7) reasonable assurance of accreditation; (8) associate membership; (9) accreditation eligible; and (10) preliminary provisional approval.

Accreditation includes: (1) provisional accreditation; (2) probationary accreditation; (3) accreditation with qualifications; (4) conditional accreditation; (5) accreditation; and (6) membership.

The lack of consistency in this area is particularly noticeable in regard to the term "provisional accreditation" which is used by various agencies to denote two significantly different accreditation statuses.

To what extent does this lack of consistency cause confusion and hardship in the higher education community? Is it a problem, for instance, for a comprehensive university to have its total operation evaluated by a regional association every ten years; its school of architecture every five years; its law school every seven years; its journalism school every six years; and its engineering school possibly every two or four years? Is it confusing to students, parents, and the general public when a developing law school of high potential is granted "provisional accreditation" status and an established school of dentistry of very marginal quality in the same university is granted an identical "provisional

accreditation" status?

Since these questions cannot be answered here, two recommendations appear to be in order. First, there is a clear need for an annual or bi-annual accreditation directory with well-organized, summary information about each accrediting agency. Such a reference should include a concise "fact sheet" on each agency which would indicate such basic information as: (1) location of agency headquarters; (2) name of chief executive officer; (3) conditions of eligibility for accreditation; (4) term of accreditation granted; (5) classifications and definitions of pre-accreditation and accreditation status; (6)scope of accrediting activities; and other pertinent items. This type of publication should be an extremely informative and helpful reference, not only to the higher education community and accrediting agencies, but to federal and state governments, foundations, the professions, and many others interested in the subject.

Secondly, there appears to be little reason why accrediting agencies cannot arrive at closer agreement on certain basic nomenclature and conditions of accreditation. Uniformity, in itself, is no virtue and no argument is made here for complete standardization. There is, in fact, no more justification for the standardization of accrediting agencies than there is for the standardization of institutions and programs which they accredit.

On the other hand, it would seem possible for accrediting agencies to narrow the range of variation in certain basic areas, without drastically affecting their fundamental philosophies, policies, or procedures of accreditation. It seems reasonable to assume that a greater degree of consistency among agencies would contribute to the clarity and credibility of the accrediting process.

Despite numerous differences, there are some broad areas of consistency throughout the total group. There is, for instance, fairly general agreement on the purposes of accreditation. Throughout the numerous statements of philosophy and purpose, two basic functions of accreditation emerge. The first reflects accrediting agencies' responsibility to the higher education community; the second to the general public.

Accreditation began in an attempt to improve academic quality. The maintenance and strengthening of quality is still a fundamental purpose of all accrediting activities. The regional associations consider it to be the dominant purpose. They attempt to fulfill this purpose essentially by encouraging continuous institutional self-study and analysis; by providing counsel and assistance to institutions in their regions; and by evaluating an institution according to its stated objectives and evidence of their accomplishment.

In 1939, at a major conference on accreditation, agency representatives agreed that the primary purpose of accreditation was to identify to prospective students and parents, licensing and registration boards, philanthropic foundations, and the general public those institutions/programs which merited public acceptance. This is still a primary purpose, particularly among the professional accrediting groups. There is, however, a significant difference in the baseline which these agencies use to evaluate and identify quality units. Some are similar to the regionals in their philosophy that an institution or program should be evaluated in terms of its stated objectives. A greater number indicate that the purpose of accreditation is the identification of professional components which meet or exceed minimum standards.

Emphasis upon educational improvement and public trust has a different focus among the national institutional accrediting agencies. Three of the four agencies in this category have an identical statement of dual purpose, i.e., improvement of educational quality and performance of public service through promotion and maintenance of ethical business practices. These agencies are unique in the total group in focusing their purpose upon institutional business ethics although the standards of several agencies reflect varying concern with sound business management, ethical advertising, non-exploitation of students, appropriate student tuition charges

and refunds, and similar matters.

Virtually every agency devotes a standard to institutional administration and governance. The regional associations are interested in the governing board and a well-organized, clearly delineated administrative structure. The national institutional agencies focus considerable attention upon administrative and financial management. The specialized/professional agencies are primarily interested in the relationship of the professional unit to the parent institution, the internal structure of the school, and the leadership role of the director or dean.

A recurring criticism of accreditation is that it restricts institutional autonomy. For the most part, this criticism is not applicable to the broad, general statements on institutional governance which dominate most of the standards. There are, however, a few requirements which may raise questions of infringement upon institutional autonomy. A few examples are chiropractic's requirement that faculty must be organized into departments (thus apparently foreclosing the option of newer and more fluid organizational structures); law's requirement that the law librarian must be responsible to the dean and faculty of the law school; physical therapy's requirement that it must approve the credentials of the director of the program, and allied health's requirement of prior approval for increasing student enrollment in some programs.

The most widespread question of institutional autonomy, however, relates to the specific requirements of some agencies on faculty number, load, and student-faculty ratio. It is understandable, for instance, that a university administration, wrestling with numerous problems, may feel frustration and resentment when accrediting groups dictate that it must maintain a faculty load of 12 credit hours in business; 15 contact hours in chemistry; and 8 to 9 contact hours for teachers of lecture courses in art. Or that the maximum faculty-student ratio must be 1:15 in journalism; 1:10 in dietetics; 1:14 in landscape architecture; 1:20 in forestry; and so on.

The standards do not, of course, explain the basis upon which these specific requirements have been established or validated. Nor is it clear why some agencies feel the need for arbitrary requirements while others state them in only general terms and others omit any mention of them. In any case, it is evident that the policies and requirements of accrediting agencies on these and similar issues vary widely.

Again, no argument for uniformity is presented here. It is recommended, however, that all agencies examine their specific requirements in comparison with those of similar associations and that they be prepared to justify and validate any mandated requirements upon the basis of concern for educational quality.

Another major criticism of accreditation has been, and is,

that it inhibits educational experimentation and innovation. Almost every agency, of course, has a standard on the educational program. Regional agencies are primarily concerned about the consonance of the program with stated institutional objectives, student needs, and available resources. Professional agencies are concerned that the program represents adequate preparation for the profession.

For the most part, those agencies which prescribe the content of the program do so in broad, general terms. Some indicate broad areas or blocks of content which should be included; others specify basic principles of curriculum design or student competencies to be developed. Only a very, very few prescribe content in the form of specific topics, minimum-maximum percentages or semester hours, suggested "model" curricular patterns or other forms which might conceivably hamper educational innovation.

Many of the agencies which accredit associate and baccalaureate programs are concerned about the balance between general education and professionalized content. Again, with rare exceptions, requirements are stated in broad, general, flexible terms.

One of the most arbitrary requirements for the educational program relates to its duration and several agencies require that the program extend over a certain number of years, semesters, months, weeks or (in a very few cases) even hours. It should be noted, however, that a few agencies which have arbitrary requirements also

recognize the need for flexibility and experimentation in extending or telescoping time requirements.

A relatively small number of specialized agencies are fairly prescriptive about the sequence of the program and specify that professionalization must be concentrated primarily in the upper two years of a four-year program. Whether the rationale for this requirement is valid, or whether it constitutes an unreasonable restriction upon student transferability and "career ladder" mobility is a question which may need further study.

Not only do most standards on the educational program permit flexibility and creativity, but several agencies, both institutional and specialized, such as Middle States, North Central, Home Study Council, optometry, dentistry, journalism, music, social work, and many others specifically state that they encourage curricular experimentation and innovation.

In short, the data of this study indicate that the large majority of accrediting agencies include in their standards relatively few requirements which would inhibit educational experimentation. When such requirements do appear, they are focused more upon the duration and sequence of the program rather than upon its content.

Standards on students vary considerably. The most general area of concern is, apparently, student admissions. Regional agencies are concerned that admission policies and procedures are compatible with institutional objectives. National institutional agencies

emphasize the ethics of student recruitment and admissions. Specialized agencies are interested in the number and quality of students admitted. Although some may suggest certain quantitative and qualitative criteria which may be used in the selection process, only one agency stipulates a specific formula for admission. This is, however, limited to the graduate program.

Most agencies which mention number of students recognize that this is an institutional prerogative although they urge that the number must be compatible with the resources of the program. The Liaison Committee on Medical Education states that it may establish a quota for certain programs/institutions while the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation indicates that approval by it and/or its affiliated organizations or review boards must be secured for increasing student capacity in certain programs.

Other broad areas which receive attention from most accrediting groups are facilities and resources, finances, and the library. Again, the detail with which these are examined varies widely although, for the most part, concern is addressed to general adequacy and apropriateness in terms of program requirements and student needs.

Another criticism of accrediting standards pertains to their reliance upon quantitative rather than qualitative measures. This is certainly far less true today than it was in the past. In the mid-thirties, the North Central Association, after intensive study,

replaced its quantitative standards with qualitative criteria. Many agencies since then have moved in a similar direction. Standards of several associations are now completely descriptive and qualitative. Moreover, quantification, when used, is concentrated primarily upon items of faculty number, load, and ratio (as mentioned previously) and upon certain aspects of the educational program. Criticisms heard occasionally to the effect that accrediting standards contain rigid requirements on the number of square feet of floor space or the number of volumes in the library are, with very, very few exceptions, simply not valid according to the evidence of this study.

This fact does not mean, however, that accrediting groups are not interested in quantified information. Many of them request (or require) the institutional self-study to contain specific, detailed, itemized information on items ranging all the way from the number of faculty holding terminal degrees to the profit and loss of the book store. The extent to which such requirements affect the application and interpretation of the standards can not be determined by this study, but would be an important consideration for examination in a follow-up study.

A discussion of the changing focus of accreditation has a direct relationship to another criticism of accreditation; namely, its reliance upon outmoded standards. In the light of this criticism, it is interesting to note the dates of adoption/revision of the

Table VIII

Dates of Adoption/Revision of Ninety Sets of Accrediting Standards Employed by Fifty-two Accrediting Agencies

	n.d.	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	Total
Regional Agencies (Ch. 2)							2	5	2		9
Institutional Agencies (Ch. 3)								3	1		4
Professional Agencies (Ch. 4)					2		7	2	4		15
Professional Agencies (Ch. 5)	9	1[a]	2[b]	3	7	4	4	14	14	4	62
Total	9	1	2	3	9	4	13	24	21	4	90

[a] The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education has adopted revised standards which become effective January 1, 1979.

[b] 1978 revision of CAHEA's Essentials of an Approved Educational Program for the Assistant to the Primary Care Physician now awaiting approval.

ninety sets of standards, as indicated in Table VIII.

It is very clear from the above that most accrediting agencies make a serious attempt to modernize and update their standards. Of the total 81 which are dated, only fifteen are five or more years old, and revisions of two of these will become effective shortly.

In contrast, 66 or 73% have been revised within the last five years. More than half the total number have been revised within the past two years. According to these figures, there seems to be little evidence on which to fault accrediting agencies for their failure to keep their standards under continuing review and revision.

According to the literature on accreditation, there is an ever-increasing interest in evaluating and accrediting institutions or programs in terms of outcomes. Several accrediting groups are moving in this direction. The Middle States Association has the most comprehensive statement on this topic. In addition, the national institutional agencies and many specialized groups such as teacher education, construction education, engineering, journalism, industrial technology, and many others, indicate that they are interested in follow-up studies of graduates which is, of course, one type of evidence of educational outcomes. On the whole, it seems safe to conclude that, although there is currently much interest in evaluation according to outcomes, at the present time efforts in this direction are concentrated almost exclusively upon follow-up studies of graduates.

In conclusion, it should be reiterated that this study focuses only upon the content of accrediting standards and guidelines. Since these statements vary widely in almost every respect, it is difficult

to arrive at valid conclusions or generalizations.

On the whole, however, the evidence of this study indicates that current accrediting standards are more qualitative than quantitative; more descriptive than prescriptive; more general than specific; and more current than outdated. There are, however, certain exceptions to this generalization which appear to merit re-examination by accrediting groups.

Standards and guidelines represent only one aspect of the accrediting process. Of equal, or greater importance, are the requirements, procedures, and policies relating to other aspects of the accrediting process such as the institutional self-study, the evaluation team visit, and the final decision-making process. It seems reasonable to assume that the data and conclusions of this study would undoubtedly be affected by an examination of any and all of such aspects. In other words, what actually happens in the accrediting process may, of course, be quite different from what is stated in the standards, since many thousands of individuals, with varying biases and backgrounds, are involved in the implementation of the published standards.

It is suggested, therefore, that a comprehensive overview of the interpretation, implementation, and application of accrediting standards would represent a valuable supplement to the present study and that the combined findings would provide a comprehensive, objective

insight into the voluntary accreditation process and its impact upon American higher education at the present time.

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APPENDIX

ACCREDITING AGENCIES RECOGNIZED

by the

COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY ACCREDITATION

ABMLS	Accrediting Bureau of Medical Laboratory Schools*
ACEHSA	Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration
AACSB	American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business
AABC	American Association of Bible Colleges
ABA	American Bar Association
ACS	American Chemical Society
ACCE	American Council for Construction Education
ACEJ	American Council on Education for Journalism
ACPE	American Council on Pharmaceutical Education
ADA	American Dental Association
ADiA	American Dietetic Association
AHEA	American Home Economics Association
ALA	American Library Association
CAHEA	American Medical Association, Committee on Health Education and Accreditation
AOA	American Optometric Association
AOsA	American Osteopathic Association
APTA	American Physical Therapy Association
APA	American Podiatry Association
APsA	American Psychological Association
ASLA	American Society of Landscape Architects
ASHA	American Speech and Hearing Association
AVMA	American Veterinary Medical Association
AsCPE	Association for Clinical Pastoral Education
AALS	Association of American Law Schools
AICS	Association of Independent Colleges and Schools
ATS	Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada
CCE	Council on Chiropractic Education
CEPH	Council on Education for Public Health
CORE	Council on Rehabilitation Education
CSWE	Council on Social Work Education
ECPD	Engineers' Council for Professional Development
FIDER	Foundation for Interior Design Education Research
LCME	Liaison Committee on Medical Education of the Council on Medical Education, American Medical Association and the Executive Council, Association of American Medical Colleges

* Name changed after this study to Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools

MSA	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education
NAAB	National Architectural Accrediting Board
NAPNES	National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service
NAIT	National Association of Industrial Technology
NASA	National Association of Schools of Art
NASM	National Association of Schools of Music
NATTS	National Association of Trade and Technical Schools
NCATE	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NHSC	National Home Study Council
NLN	National League for Nursing
NE/CHE	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
NE/CVTC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Vocational, Technical, Career Institutions
NCA	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
NWA	Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Colleges
SAF	Society of American Foresters
SA/CC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges
SA/COEI	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Occupational Education Institutions
WASC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
WASC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges